SOUTH VIET NAM In Struggle

6th Year — December 18, 1972

No 178

Address: HT 1217 B-SVN
c/o DAZIMINA HANOI
19, Hai Ba Trung, Hanoi, DRVN
and all RSVN Embassies, Information Bureaux in foreign countries

6 MAR 1 1973
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CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE SOUTH VIET NAM NATIONAL FRONT FOR LIBERATION

editorial

On the NFL 12th founding anniversary

VIET NAM WILL WIN

THE South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation is twelve years old. Its emergence is a great milestone on the historic path of glory of the Vietnamese nation, an important turning-point in our people's confrontation with American aggression and national salvation effort. Since then the NFL has achieved an unmatched feat in history by leading the South Vietnamese people to check an aggression waged by US imperialism, the strongest of present-day imperialisms.

The US is a young imperialism full of brutal force. It commands tremendous troops strength, weaponry, resources, money, and advanced science and a modern military technique. For a time it ruled the roost in all continents, squandering dollars to submit Europe, brandishing arms to intimidate Asia, and regarding Africa as a fat prey and Latin America as its "backyard." It looked down upon the globe as its own empire and gave itself the role of world gendarme. It maintains bases everywhere and occupation troops in many countries. It thinks that dollars and hardware can give it a solid position and enough strength to stem all revolutionary tides on earth. For all its truculence, obstinacy and cunning as it is, it is getting a sound beating in Viet Nam. It has been said, not without justification, that it has chosen a wrong opponent. It believed that Viet Nam, not larger than the State of Virginia, could rapidly be transformed into an overseas territory of the US. To its great surprise, this small S-shaped country on this side of the Pacific has turned out to be the scene of the end of the golden era of the US.

US imperialism has not been able to swallow up Viet Nam in spite of all its war efforts. Over 200 billion dollars have been spent, over 10 million of tons of bombs and shells expended, over half a million GIs fielded along with two-thirds of the US strategic air force, one half of the tactical air force and one sixth of the navy. Sophisticated tactics devised by the Pentagon have been used: heli-borne and armour-borne tactics, "leap-frog" and "bolt-on-height" tactics, etc. Strategic formulas such as "Search and destroy", "Clear and hold", "Defence from afar," "Native manpower + US firepower", etc. have also been applied one after another. So have various strategies: Unilateral war, Special war, Limited war, "Vietnamization" then re-Americanization of the war with the massive deployment of the US air force and navy. It has been a whole process of war escalations, each

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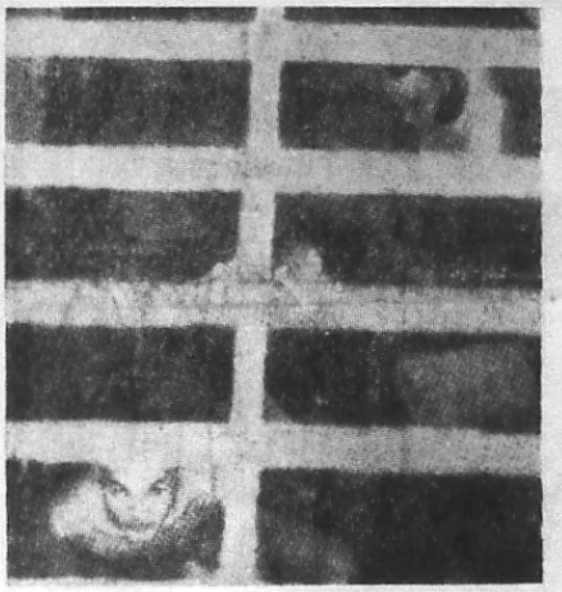
VIET NAM'S WINNING POSTURE



I've just escaped from a "tiger cage"

WE were walked to the landing stage. Handcuffs and chains noisily clicked against one another. Saigon soldiers with bayonets drawn stood guard at every two metres along the way from the prison's gate to the wharf.

There, a wide-open landing craft, crowded with troops and equipped with one 37mm gun and eight 20mm guns, was waiting for us. Golden shells glittered amidst the drabness of rusty iron, the black paint of the ship hull, the prisoners' shabby clothes and pale faces.

Suddenly the siren sounded, a thick cloud of smoke spread, and the ship slowly left the wharf.

What a moving moment! We were leaving the mainland and our fellow countrymen for Poulo Condor (Con Son) Island and did not know when we should return. I tried to look out through the window gaps at Saigon for a last time, but all its familar views quickly went out of sight.

The engine rumble filled me with sadness and aggravated my longing for Saigon and my family.

The waves began lapping strongly against the craft's sides, sending up their silver foam and wetting our clothes. Meanwhile, US jet planes were circling overhead, tearing the air with their roar.

The sick prisoners lay flat on the floor, those suffering from sea-sickness vomited and moaned, while others bent double to duck the foaming waves' splash. All of us were left to starve for several days, our meagre rations were robbed by the guards. At their head were three young Yanks who now and then went round the ship and gave them orders.

"Here we are!" someone cried out.

I tried to get to my feet. The craft's door was opened. The sun rose high in the sky. Poulo Condor Island appeared before our eyes. All the trees, houses and roads there seemed to be stained with the prisoners' blood.

The guards yelled orders to us to go ashore, but nobody wanted to leave the craft. Finally they had to force us out. When we began dragging along on the stony alleys, the soldiers thundered: "Stop!" After calling out our names and counting us one after another, they drove us into a jail. First I was taken to Ward 8, and two days later to Ward 7 where I got a delirious fever as a result of the sea-sickness and my old wounds.

I came to at nightfall. There was nobody outside the jail doors. New and old detainees at Ward 7 quickly became closer mates.

Only a few days later, a new ordeal began. When leaving the craft, the prisoners had been threatened and manhandled. But now in the jail, the warders tried to create a false atmosphere of relaxation. Prison chief Le Van Khuong came to see us and gently talked to us. But one morning, he summoned me to the torture room. He boasted of his "powerful nation" and "justice." He warned to kill all those daring to oppose them. He vaunted that he himself had beaten to death over 100 communists, and on the island, there were hundreds of others of his type.

Paying no attention to what he said, I sat down lost in thought. Killings and arrests were their routine. They had even admitted it to the detained patriots. This far remote island was soaked with the latter's blood. They were also responsible for thousands of others taken to unknown destination or deported.

Khuong tried to persuade me into talking all day long, but without success. Then he threw me into a "tiger cage."

This was a special prison which existed nowhere else. There reigned the most atrocious and bloodiest terror on Poulo Condor Island and other parts of the mainland.

When I arrived at this hell, some prisoner greeted me with the following verses:

Despite sufferings, keep our values whole,
Despite danger, don't forget our pledges,
Despite poisons or briberies
Remain loyal and true to our oaths.

In the "tiger cage," the detainees were brutalized at least 4 times a day. As foods were distributed far from their wards, they had to rush to the place with bent heads, being not allowed to look around. The warders hid behind a door or a lamp-post, and when the prisoners ran past, they jumped out and struck at the inmates' bellies with their knees. The jailers made water on the prisoners' heads and beat them any time they liked. In the cage, the prisoners were also forbidden to read any kind of newspapers or books or write anything except their depositions.

According to the "regulations," each prisoner was to be beaten by 10 warders, usually after eating and while asleep at night. Therefore, the detainees dared not eat all their rations or fall asleep. The widely-used method here was to force the prisoners to stand close to a wall, stretch their arms and receive hard blows on their chest, knees or ankles. The jailers also set dogs or mad people on them.

Torture in the "tiger cage" was quite different from other places of detention. Once I was submitted to torture by Nguyen Van Tot group. They compelled me to stand about three feet away from a wall, with my hands on it. They then lit two 500-watt electric bulbs close behind my neck which inflicted acute pain on my head and heated my whole body. My eyes were dazzled, and I soon lost consciousness. They then brought me back to the cage and after coming to I was again put to the same atrocity.

It was really frightful in the "tiger cages." Not a day or a night passed without a prisoner succumbing to torture or some illness. In only two months, the number of fatalities amounted to 220. The cages were round the clock resounding with the torturers' yellings or beatings, the prisoners' screams and the iron doors' opening or shutting. I can never forget such a din. Day and night we were living in a constant fear and a lingering hunger. Part of our meagre rations were stolen by the warders. Diseases were rampant.

Not only tortures, but bribery and "persuasion" also constituted a punishment in the "tiger cages." They repeatedly sent disguised prisoners to persuade me to return to the "national" ranks. One day, an agent named Khuong came to "see" me. He prattled much about the "legitimacy" of the Saigon regime. Suffering from serious injuries and indignant at this impudent words, I jumped to my feet and told him in face: "You are a traitor. If you don't show repentance, you will get due punishment. While on the mainland, I already got much information about your conduct..."

In reality, I didn't know much about his past, but his heinous crimes against the prisoners alone deserved severe punishment. Frightened and embarrassed by my warning, he went away without a word. This further strengthened my confidence in the revolution's certain victory.

On December 23, 1967, as usual, a jailer came and took me to the torture room. After telling me to sit down, Prison chief Nguyen Van Tha said to me: "Provincial Governor of Con Son, Major Nguyen Van Ve ordered us to bring Ho Thanh Dam to Quy Nhon to check evidence just collected by the General Police Station..."

To be taken to Quy Nhon or to be liquidated? That was all my mates' worry.

While I was taking leave of them, 4 jailers broke into the ward, handcuffed me and marched me away. "Down with the murderers!", "Down with the US aggressors!", the prisoners' angry shouts rang all over the prison.

After arriving at Saigon wharf, they took me to the General Police Station where I was confined in a very narrow and dark room. Next morning, they drove me to Quy Nhon.

The province capital looked strange to me, but the prisoners there were very friendly. I met a large number of students and even several old fellow-inmates from Chi Hoa and Tan Hiep jails, and our mutual affection was enhanced and so was our sense of solidarity.

It was precisely thanks to this affection and assistance that I succeeded in escaping from the enemy's fangs and claws.

But tens of thousands of other patriots are still languishing in all prisons in the US-Thieu-held area. Their lives are hanging by a thread. The nearer their doom, the more fiendish atrocities they resort to. They are scheming to liquidate thousands and thousands of prisoners who have long cherished a hope which is also a heavy task, that is how to make it possible for everyone to live in freedom.

HO THANH DAM

National concord or Viet Nam's national revolutionary ethics

MORE than ever is the spirit of national concord predominant in all South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation and South Viet Nam Republic Provisional Revolutionary Government positions regarding the settlement of South Viet Nam internal political affairs. It is our people's revolutionary ethics, the source of Viet Nam's strength and a truth of the times.

It is a dread and a terror to the forces of aggression, reaction and subservience to foreigners, which frantically oppose it and clamourously revile it as a Communist Trojan horse, a Viet Cong trick. But such a psywar smokescreen cannot obscure its radiance. It is no novelty for those Vietnamese in whose veins is still coursing the blood of our ancestors. In this beloved land, we have been sharing weal and woe in the centuries-old fight against a harsh tropical nature and brutal feudal aggressors from outside, for survival and development.

A people not large in size, a country not extensive in area, Viet Nam is situated in a tropical zone scorched by the sun, soaked by the rains, a habitual victim to invasions. It has gone through innumerable ordeals and sufferings and from generation to generation has confronted natural calamities and enemy destruction. Whether in the North or in the South, whether in an out-of-the-way place or in the heart of a city, the Vietnamese man is, from a child in arms, haunted by the theme of mutual love glorified in lullabies and folk songs such as :

Like a red ribbon adorning and a looking glass,
Fellow-countrymen must feel mutual compassion...

and :

Oh, gourds, do compassionate the pumpkins,
Though of different kind, you share the same trellis.

THE spirit of national concord springs from Viet Nam's traditional humanism and sense of solidarity. It is apparent in our people's daily life. It is a rule of conduct of the Vietnamese. And in time of invasions, it goes beyond the limits of the villages' bamboo belts and assumes national proportions.

We always look back with pride to it which was responsible for our nation's feats during its most fateful hours. Right in the first years of the first century, it was the cement which bound the chieftains of various tribes assembled under the standard of the Trung Sisters. All their conflicts of interests, all their quarrels about social positions had been put aside for the sake of the great cause, national salvation and survival. National concord was instrumental in bringing about the dramatic triumph of the insurrection which aroused the inhabitants of all the 65 districts and counties of our country against the Han hordes.

In our nation's multi-millenary history that was not the only case. There was also the Dien Hong Assembly of Notables whose decision to face the foreign aggressors brought closer generals and soldiers, regardless of ranks and personal considerations, and animated them all with the single purpose of wiping out the invaders, as unequivocally written down in Tran Hung Dao's Order of the Day.

The spirit of national concord was born and has grown parallel to the nation. Fully aware of the interdependence between family and faced with foreign aggression, our ancestors have raised national concord to the level of a moral principle, made it into a national obligation and regarded it as a source of strength and a key to success. It has been bred into the bones and flesh of every Vietnamese, cultivated into a tradition of a small nation, incessantly subject to and unfailingly victorious over, foreign aggression.

True to that tradition, in the anti-French resistance, President Ho Chi Minh held high the "Unity, Unity, Great Unity ; Success, Success, Great Success" banner, instilled into us the feeling of forgiveness, sympathy and affection for those who have strayed from the fold, under the force of circumstances. He was convinced that every Vietnamese loved his country, desired peace and prized freedom. He taught us that it would take only a tiny spark to fan up the smouldering flame in every one of us into a prairie fire.

IT is in continuation of such a tradition that the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation is for the union of all forces that can be united and for winning over all forces that can be won over. With concrete policies, with variegated and suitable organizations susceptible of appealing to the nationalist sentiment of people from all walks of life, the Front has shown each social section, each class and each patriotic individual its or his role in the Front and responsibility in the national salvation effort, a role and responsibility fitting its or his capacities.

With high regard for national concord, the Front stresses in its political program : "The guarantee of the triumph of the resistance against US imperialism for national salvation is national unity irrespective of political complexions... As for those forces who for one reason or another cannot adhere to the Front, the latter suggests joint action against the common enemy. "This broad-minded policy has accounted for the rallying under the Front's patriotic banner not only various segments of the people, political forces, religious communities but also for the winning over of many social organizations like the Associations of Patriotic Saigon Armymen, the Associations of Break-away Saigon Army Officers and Soldiers... It has moreover achieved united action with other political set-ups in Saigon, Hue... in various drives.

The PRG's ten-point policy toward patriotic Saigon servicemen and their families made public on January 25, 1972 has supplied another vivid illustration of the spirit of national concord. It is aimed at alleviating the sufferings caused to our people by the "Vietnamization" scheme, bridging the chasms created by it in each family and giving national-minded elements in the Saigon Army the chance of redeeming their past mistakes.

But the most typical expression of our spirit of national concord can be found in the proposal for the formation of a tri-partite government of national concord. Right in its 12-point program of action the SVR PRG has made it amply clear, as it eventually has in other documents, Most recently, on September 11, 1972, it again pointed out that a political settlement of the South Viet Nam issue must be based on the reality there, which is the existence of two different regimes, two different armies and other political forces. Such a situation calls for the setting up of the suggested government to be entrusted with the management of state affairs, organization of a free general election, elaboration of a constitution and formation of a regular government. As regards the two armies, the Vietnamese parties concerned will lay their heads together and find an arrangement. To see to the full implementation of national concord, the 12-point programme of action strictly bans "all acts of terror, reprisals and discrimination against people having collaborated with either side, now residing at home or abroad." In the September 11 statement, the PRG has also expressed its readiness to discuss measures to ensure to each component of the government of national concord, full equality, mutual respect, and no take-over by any side.

The spirit of national concord will in addition be the guideline for the government of national concord to solve every problem of the nation and carry out reconstruction. It must be abundantly clear in every facet of national activity, in military, political, economic and diplomatic affairs. It must see to the interests, positions and roles of each social segment, each member of the community. It will pervade all the policies of the peaceful, independent and neutral South Viet Nam of to-morrow.

AN extremely vicious scheme of US imperialism, "Vietnamization" is a "new form of warfare" aimed at the wiping out of a whole nation at the smallest cost in men and materials for the aggressors" (Declaration of the Conference of US and World Scientists in Berlin in late 1971). It is an extermination war on two scores. On the one hand, one faction of the nation coerced and incited by US imperialism into becoming its hired killers, themselves objects of its scorn, abuses and destruction. Their families not only are racked by material and mental misery but also by losses in life and resources. "Vietnamization" has most perfidiously attempted to brutalize a whole generation of young men into a gang of reactionaries and fiendish murderers of their own fellow-countrymen and prolonged the internecine strife with an artificially generated feud. It has supplanted the implacable hatred of our entire people for the aggressors with deepening enmity and suspicion among people of the same country. This heinous crime has inflicted a serious wound on our nation's feeling.

It is high, time to put an end to this state of things and let every Vietnamese draw himself up to proper proportions and achieve genuine national concord.

We are ready to let bygones be bygones, fill up all rifts, pool our efforts and bring the war to an end, and regain independence, peace and freedom. This is a common task for every member of our nation. As Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho has declared during the commemoration of the 11th founding anniversary of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation : "Our people have experienced over 25 years of resistance war. The Front's policy of national concord will restore mutual affection and confidence among the Vietnamese, enhance their innate love for the country and end all feud and resentment for the sake of the nation's supreme cause. Such a policy will inevitably make the Vietnamese nation the victor and US imperialism the vanquished."

HUYNH VAN LY

Insurgent officers and men of Saigon Regiment 56 hailing the liberation fighters

communion

QUANG DIEN, a summer night 1967...

The sky was liquid; the full moon of the 6th lunar month was bright. I was walking leisurely in the yard of the district office when I heard a voice reciting an unfamiliar poem. I head for the ward from which the voice came:

In jail there is neither flower nor wine
What could one do when the night is so exquisite?
To the window I go and look at the moonshine,
Through the bars the moon gazes at the poet.

Astonished, I asked the warder: "Who is reciting verses there?"

"A shaven-headed guerilla, sir," the man said.

To make sure, I asked him again "What did you say?"

"A shaven-headed guerilla," the man repeated slowly.

"A shaven-headed guerilla," what a strange name!

Out of curiosity, I told the warder to bring the guerilla to my room for questioning.

The guerilla was a young man about 23, with an intelligent face, two shining eyes and snow-white teeth. But what was most striking about him was his shaven head. His piercing eyes made me feel uneasy as I realized that I was somewhat responsible for his shaven head. In fact it was the habitual punishment in this prison for offences I was sure that he deserved it. I asked him in pity: "When were you arrested and why did my men shave your head?"

"I have just been arrested this afternoon," he said with a smile and went on: "I shaved my head myself, Captain."

"Oh, I see!" I exclaimed and asked him: "Who is the author of that strange poem you've just recited?"

"President Ho Chi Minh!"

"Did President Ho Chi Minh write verses?" I cried out, astonished.

"Yes, he did. And a lot of excellent poems too."

As to prevent further questions from me, the man asked me suddenly. "Do you remember me, Captain?"

My eyes wide open, I looked intently at him but could not place him, though I remembered seeing him somewhere.

"Your face is quite familiar to me but sorry, I have such a short memory," I answered apologetically.

He sighed and said: "Of course, how can you remember me, Captain? Seven years have gone by; and everything has changed. I am Ky, an '*ancien Pellerinois*' (1) like you!"

"So you are '*Ky the artist,*'" I shouted with joy.

KY was my school mate but was two classes behind me. Before I left school in 1960, we were members of an artistic group in which he was the most outstanding performer. He played the guitar and violin very well and knew how to declaim verses. So we nicknamed him *Ky the artist*.

Any performance without his participation was a sure flop. He was loved for his behaviour and hardword. After finishing his secondary education at *Pellerin*, he entered the Teachers' College in Hue. While studying, he gave private tuition till 1966 when the Buddhist upheaval broke out.

After a short pause, Ky went on:

"I've seen that the administration is more and more dependent on the Americans. More and more it unmasks its anti-democratic face. 'Dependent' is a way of speaking, but to be more accurate South Viet Nam is ruled by the Americans. So long as the Americans are here, so long as a US-master-minded administration exists, the South Vietnamese are not free and independent. Excuse me if this hurts you, Captain; as far as I am concerned, I have chosen a path of my own: "national liberation."

Listening attentively, I asked: "Why were you apprehended and why did you shave your head?"

"The country is in distress, my family is separated," he replied with a vacant look. "I don't care about my hair. When I shaved my head I took the oath that only when peace came back, should I let my hair grow again and only then should I think about my future."

"But unfortunately for me," he continued after a sigh, "when this afternoon I made up my mind to leave Tam Giang for Huong Dien to take up some assignment there I was waylaid by your men and captured. However, though a captive I am resolved to keep the path I have opted for. This afternoon when I was brought here, you were away. After seven years of separation, I never expected that I should meet you again here. I believe I've put you in a delicate situation!"

I looked at Ky, engrossed in thought. My position was awkward indeed! A friend of my youth, a school mate who was with me in the same artistic group, had turned a "guerilla"! Of course he had an ideal of his own which at that time I did not understand. As for me, I was following a different path. Two friends, two paths! An irony of fate brought us together. Now Ky was my prisoner while I was a captain, head of a district and a battalion commander. Ky had been my friend, now he addressed me as captain. Nevertheless I felt bound to him by an invisible tie, though it was very slender. Thinking of thousands of Vietnamese families having members fighting on both sides of the frontline, I suddenly remembered seeing at a family feast at Quang Loi village a soldier of my battalion eating near a Liberation fighter. There were at that party many people of both sides who enjoyed the occasion in a peaceful atmosphere. What has brought them together? It is their ancestors. None of them wanted to see a quarrel or a bloodshed take place in front of their forefathers' altar.

That is what prevails in a family. And what about a country? In a country which is a great family descending from the same ancestors, why concord cannot be achieved? I think that at a given time, under given circumstances, all Vietnamese issued from the same ancestors and sharing the same history can live in concord. While in a family, the ancestors are the factors which make the offsprings forget all feuds and grudges, and live together, in a country bound by a supreme interest and common survival, concord is quite a possible thing. This possibility will surely come true because in the course of our history, our ancestors have many a time translated into reality. At present, Ky and I may not see eye to eye, but in future, there will come a time better understanding will be achieved. An educated man, Ky was to live a happy and comfortable life with a pretty wife and sweet children. But he has refused all that and chosen his own path, a path fraught with danger.

While seeing Ky back to his ward, I felt it my duty to do something for him even if he did not want involve me in his case. From the police report, I learned that he had been apprehended for lack of regular papers. Besides, the fact that he was not carrying any arm was a further reason for me to help him. I told the policeman who took him to the police station to make clear in his report that Ky was not a "dangerous suspect."

After Ky had been marched to the police station, I started worrying about what might happen to him, and I reproached myself to task for not having helped him in a more positive way. Time passed by till my breakaway.

QUANG TRI in the fall of 1972.

After our return to the fold, my friends and I were given a warm reception by the inhabitants. We have been discharging all tasks assigned by the government. I myself have been with the liberation armed forces at the Tri-Thien front. Defying US heavy bombings, our fellow-countrymen and combatants on the Quang Tri front have been courageously working day and night to defend and build the liberated zone.

Sometime ago, a song and dance ensemble came and performed for us in the very firing line.

Leaving my trench, I saw the liberation fighters sitting in a half circle in front of two hurricane-lamps and listening to a duo singing "Eastern Truong Son, Western Truong Son." To the accompaniment of his own guitar, the man, in a baritone voice, was performing with a female companion, with a soprano. Hearty cheers acclaimed them. Then from the crowd a voice rose: "some poems, some poems!" The young man gave a smile to his partner; when she had withdrawn into the wings, he said: "At your request. I am going to declaim the poem '*At twenty five*' in homage to our heroic fighters at the Quang Tri front."

After a prolonged ovation, he began:

"The Ho Chi Minh trail, a newly-cut road,
Running either on mountain peaks or in secret communication trenches
Is our soil; after four millenaries
It is built to the proportions of the century...

His marked Hue accent and declamation technique which captivated the audience also arrested my attention. Hearing his voice, I had the feeling I had met the man somewhere before. I drew near the stage, looked keenly at him while he was reciting that To Huu's piece.

"Good gracious! That's Ky the artist!" My cry of surprise drew the attention of the liberation fighters. Ky was before me in the flesh. I was so moved that, should I not control myself, I would jump onto the stage to hug him. His number finished, Ky bowed to the audience and stepped back amidst thundering applause.

I followed him and called out "Ky, Ky the artist!"

He turned round and greatly amazed, gazed at me from head to toe as if I was a strange animal. Suddenly he drew himself up, gave me a military salute and said: "Hail lieutenant-colonel of the South Viet Nam Liberation Army!"

"Hail, fighting artist!" I said after taking the salute.

Then, carried away by our emotion, we fell in each other's arms.

"I was very happy to learn on the radio that you have gone over to our side," he said joyfully. "But I didn't expect to meet you here. You look much stouter than before!"

"There remain two items before our next comes. Get ready, love."

A female voice with a soft North Vietnamese accent interrupted our conversation. I turned round and saw the pretty young girl who had just performed with him.

"I want you to meet Miss Bach Chieu, a member of my ensemble," Ky said while the girl looked shyly at me.

Then turning to me, he went on: "This is Lieutenant-Colonel Dinh I have often spoken to you about."

"Mr Dinh! Ky has constantly mentioned your name," the woman's voice rang out merrily, "especially these last few days after he heard that you've crossed over to us."

"He has probably spoken ill of me, hasn't he?" I said smiling.

"Not at all, he only spoke well of you."

They left me to return to the stage. They were a charming couple indeed.

My mind reverted to the day I met Ky in 1967. Since then I had been hoping we would meet again and would come to understand each other better. This day has come, now not only do we understand each other better but we are following the same road. I hope that similar encounters and reunions are happening to Vietnamese fighting on the two sides.

Bach Chieu and Ky were singing "The Truong Son Stick" in a duet.

Their voices which rose high in the air seemed to challenge all American bombing and quicken the steps of young fighters who defy all dangers and hardships, marching wave after wave to the front.

Reminiscences of **PHAM VAN DINH**
Former commander of the Saigon 56th Regiment who defected to the PRG of RSVN.

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(1) *Alumnus of the Pellerin school, an educational establishment in Hue run by Catholic priests.*

the PRG, a government of the people

To meet the requirements the anti-US resistance for national salvation and respond to the deep aspirations of the people, the revolutionary forces in South Viet Nam called on June 6, 1969 the All-South Viet Nam Congress of People's Representatives to decide on the line of the anti-US resistance and form the PRG of the RSVN. The PRG is an organ of power fully competent to lead the people and manage state affairs. Born at a great historic conjuncture amidst the tide of offensives and uprisings which has led lo strategic gains and selected by the Congress of People's Representatives, it unquestionably is a legal government, the authentic representative of the South Vietnamese people.

Many countries in the world have recognized, and established diplomatic relations with, it. The PRG has its information bureaus in a number of North European countries; it has been invited to many important international conferences and has sent many delegations on friendship visits to many countries.

In the revolutionary practice, it has worked out major policies which have commanded the attention of all circles and all sections of the people in cities and towns as well as overseas Vietnamese. Proceeding from the principle of national independence and faithfully reflecting the will and deep aspirations of the entire people, these policies have won the unanimous approval and absolute confidence of the people and warm sympathy and support of progressives around the world.

In the exercise of its power, the PRG has put into effect the line and guiding principles of the armed, political and diplomatic struggle and has never departed from the objective of an independent, democratic, peaceful, neutral and prosperous South Viet Nam and ultimate peaceful reunification of the country.

Under its leadership, the anti-US resistance for national salvation of the South Vietnamese people has made constant headway. By now, a relatively comprehensive system of revolutionary power has been established at provincial, district and villa e levels. Although the war is raging on with all its fierceness and with all the brutal measures resorted to by the US aggressors and their lackeys to realize their "Vietnamization," the main branches of activity — public health, culture, education, economy, finance, etc. have been functioning regularly to guide production, see to the people's health, raise their cultural standards, develop literature and arts, expand education especially the training of the younger generations and build a happy and healthy life in the liberated areas.

In furtherance of the basic resolution of the Congress of People's Representatives and the Program of Action of the PRG, people's revolutionary committees — the administrative structures at grassroots level, have been set up in many places, as solid foundations of a national democratic administration, an administration by the people and for the people, and one of genuine national concord.

In response to the deepest aspirations of the South Vietnamese people, namely genuine independence, freedom and peace (PRG Program of Action), people's revolutionary committees in various provinces, in their pronouncements have undertaken first and foremost to abolish the US-Saigon colonialist rule. An end has been put to all forms of enslavement. The people have become masters of their own homeland, destiny and life.

Injustices and social inequalities have ceased to exist. All anti-democratic and fascist measures and laws by the US-Saigon regime to oppress, exploit and sway the people in urban and rural areas have been cancelled. The revolutionary administration guarantees the people's democratic liberties, enforces equality between man and woman, and abides by the policy of unity and equality among various nationalities and religious communities; it respects the freedom of belief and achieves equality among various religions, and provides facilities for all citizens to accomplish their duty. Private industry and commerce catering for the people's well-being are given protection and can carry out their normal activity. The lives, property and interests of the people are protected and cared for by the revolutionary administration. The honest activity of foreign residents including Americans is not interfered with and their lives and property protected. All these guarantees make it possible for the South Vietnamese to enjoy freedom and equality and live harmoniously in independence.

National concord is a legitimate aspiration of the South Vietnamese people. The 10-point policy regarding members of the Saigon army and administration and their families announced by the PRG on January 25, 1972 has thrown more light on the leagerness to end all internecine feuds among fellow-countrymen. In implementing this policy, socially the revolutionary administration of various localities has never discriminated against families with relatives impressed into the Saigon army to

serve as cannon-fodder for the US aggressors. Functionaries serving in various offices of the quisling administration before liberation are continuing in their jobs under the revolutionary administration. Saigon armymen are treated in accordance with the policy of the PRG. The revolutionary administration is ready to co-operate with all forces, tendencies and individuals standing for peace, independence and neutrality.

The Program of Action of the PRG of the RSVN has found concrete expression in the various policies carried out by the revolutionary administration. Since the election of the PRG by the Congress of People's Representatives and the establishment of the revolutionary administration in various localities, the South Vietnamese people, living either in the liberated zone or in areas still under US-Saigon control, have further expressed their full agreement to these policies and have endeavoured to implement them.

The Program of Action shining with justice and the concrete policies clearly demonstrating the will to achieve national concord have enlisted the confidence of the people and have been strictly carried out by experienced and honest cadres. This is an important factor upholding the people's interests.

The PRG with the revolutionary administration at all levels as its infrastructure is unquestionably a government of the people. Its strength lies in its dedication to the people's interests, in the people's trust, confidence and protection. With this strength, it is leading the people to move steadily towards its goal — an independent, democratic, peaceful, neutral and prosperous South Viet Nam and eventual peaceful reunification of the country — in defiance of all US-Thieu vicious attempts to discredit it.

TAM DUONG

PRG flag hoisted by the liberation fighters on Quang Tri Town Hall

Note of a scenario-writer

the HILLOCK hamlet

WE came to the Hillock Hamlet after the local population had risen up in arms. The uprising, so swift and so neat, had taken the American advisers in the district town flatfooted, and ten days had gone by without any reaction from them yet.

Even the most casual observer could see how much money from American tax-payers had been squandered first by Johnson and then by Nixon, on the building of this tiny hamlet into such a show-case. The administration headquarters had an impressive waiting-hall and spacious offices, and the police station was provided with a well-equipped torture room. Walls were two feet thick, and each building was adorned with a tall iron flagstaff painted red and white. In the centre of the vast court lay a half-moon pool, in the middle of which stood a mini-rockery. The information hall was large and light, with a tower, bearing a cluster of loud-speakers, jutting well above it. The school was fenced in by casuarina trees, and the glass-roofed market was as big as a communal house. The hamlet, besides, was literally flooded with electric generators, electric pumps, transplanting machines and husking machines, and well stocked with fertilizer. Cultivation had been diversified by the introduction of new strains and exotic varieties of fruit-trees. Pains had also been taken to popularize the American mode of life, and the youth had been brought up with porno literature and in the latest styles in dress. The roads used to be alive with Honda motorbikes. At night, rock music and the clinking of glasses had been heard almost everywhere.

The US, however, had spent much more on the defense of Thieu's "nationalist regime" in this hamlet than anywhere else. Prefabricated block houses, brought in by military lorries or helicopters, had been set up in great numbers, and observation posts had been erected at many places. And there was a regular network of gun emplacements, with most of the guns trained on the hamlet itself.

The American advisors, as pleased as punch, had once gone down to the hamlet to attend a solemn event — the awarding of a certificate of merit to the population for their "loyalty" to the regime.

The uprising erupted one night.

And the man who broke into the house of the hamlet chief and immobilized the latter by thrusting an AR-15 automatic rifle into his ribs and binding his hand and foot was none other than the leader of the "Civil Guard" force. The fortifications were taken over by the underground guerillas who included the owner of the restaurant at one end of the hamlet, the barber, two pastry peddlers, several long-haired youths, who used to spend their nights senerading girls, and quite a number of former "Civil Guards." The same US guns remained at the emplacements, but they were turned on enemy bases at B.B. and D., on enemy posts at A.H. and K.L., and enemy planes overhead.

The liberation of the hamlet filled the inhabitants with pride. Gone now were the long days of a double life. People's power, which year after year, had been yearned for and believed to exist all the time, was set up overnight.

The long years in the grip of the US-Thieu clique had tanght the people a great deal, and a clear demarcation line had been drawn between the loyalists and the traitors. Yet, matters were settled smoothly thanks to the 10-point policy of the Provisional Revolutionary Government, and no grudge was nurtured against those "on the other side." One Saigon soldier received from the hands of the revolutionary people the same old gun he had used against them. His heart was overwhelmed by contrition, joy and gratitude.

There was so much work to be done at once, and there was no time even for the presentation of the new administration. The first thing to do was to fortify the hamlet, and everybody, old and young, even the chairman of the revolutionary committee, came out, equipped with shovels, spades, picks and even knives, to dig bomb shelters, tanktraps, caches, fox-holes, communication trenches and tunnels.

They worked day and night, fully aware of the great hardships ahead.

WE, a cameraman of the Liberation Film Studio and I were billeted at *Mother* Tu's, a roomy house with a big watertank on one side, trained trees in the front-yard, and a vast garden of coconut-trees at the back. Our hostess had three sons. Hai Tuc, the eldest, was in the Liberation Army, and Ba Tri, the second, a police lieutenant in Saigon. Ut Muu, the youngest, was living with her. Her husband had been killed by a kick from an American officer in 1965, during the presentation of the "allied forces" to the villagers. He had done nothing wrong, but there had been something in his eyes which the American had not liked.

Enemy agents had planned, many times during the "denunciation of communism" campaign under Ngo Dinh Diem and the "Four Nays" drive initiated by Nguyen Van Thieu, to nail on the door of her house the infamous blackboard with the inscription "Viet Cong" painted in white on it. The plan had not come off thanks to her second son. He was not a police lieutenant for nothing. Anyhow, *Mother* Tu had been put under strict surveillance.

She was free now, and to questions about her age, she proudly replied "I'm twelve years Uncle Ho's junior." It was a great pride, indeed, to be able to compare publicly one's age to Uncle Ho's; but what pleased her most was the affectionate "*Mother* Tu" with which she was addressed by village folks and Front activists alike.

"Don't you fear to be misunderstood," they would assure her. "When you die your soul will fly up and join Uncle Ho. You can't be held responsible for what your children do, can you? As for Ba Tri, he will repent sooner or later."

"The news of Uncle Ho's death almost killed me," she confided to us. "I could not eat anything for two whole days. I just lay in bed and wept. And Ut Muu was greatly scared. He thought I would die, too; and he feared the enemy might find out our secret."

When we came home that night, it was 2 o'clock. The shelling by enemy artillery was less violent now. In the sky, only a few flares were flickering, and we could see some clouds.

Great changes had taken place during our month-long absence, and the hamlet was almost beyond recognition. The secular *Bang Lang* tree, whose huge trunk and large mass of violet flowers we used to look for as a landmark, was no longer seen at the gate of the hamlet. None of the close to five hundred houses was intact. The market and the school were just rubble. Of the administrative office and the police station only a few walls were left, and the mini-rockery, blown out of its base, lay on its side in the pool. Here and there were twisted frames of Hondas, and the ground was pockmarked with shell craters. The pounding of this tiny hamlet, once praised for its "loyalty" to the "nationalist regime," must have cost the US as much as its construction in the old days.

And the enemy's violence, although we had already experienced it elsewhere, was overpowering.

Mother Tu's home was not spared either. There was a gaping crater on one side of it, and the water-tank was buried under a collapsed wall. The trained trees, which Ut Muu had tended with so much love and used to camouflage the trap-door of the shelter and to preserve the memory of his father, looked shabby.

The noise we made aroused Mother Tu from her light sleep. "Is that you, Tu and Nam?" she asked. "Get up, Ut. Your brothers have come."

She came out with a blackout lamp, and showed us down into the shelter.

"You've come at last?" she exclaimed. "And the US-Thieu gang haven't scared the daylight out of you yet, have they?" she asked jokingly.

Listening to her, we forgot the fear that had weighed heavily on us during our journey.

"Ut, go and fetch the best coconuts you can find", she turned to the boy. "We'll give them a royal treat right now. Hurry up otherwise the 'Open Arms' scoundrels will come and annoy us."

We had no time to inquire after the village folks, because Mother Tu kept firing us with questions, which came in a rapid succession. She enquired about the Front people, the people in the Provisional Government, about the fight in Quang Tri, Thua Thien and other provinces, about the downing of US aircraft in North Viet Nam, about enemy air raids on Haiphong, and so many other things.

And, talking to her, we came to see more clearly how earnestly the people here, living side by side with danger, were concerning themselves about the revolution and their fellow-countrymen in other parts of the country.

Shortly after the boy had come back from the garden with a string of coconuts, a monoplane clattered up and started circling overhead. A male voice was heard from its powerful megaphome, saying: "Brothers from the North, your beautiful wives and cute children are dying to see you back, and your villages have just been struck by a catastrophic flood." The call was followed by the voice of a woman singing a lullaby while sobbing theatrically. The tape was played over and again for a very long time.

"The programme has been shortened a lot," Ut Muu commented. "There was another piece, which said: 'Brothers in the Liberation Army, go over to the Government.' I bet the tape is worn out," he added with a laugh.

We were told that each stunt like this was followed up by an attack. Sometimes it was the artillery that did the job by firing innumerable shells—fragmentation shells, gas shells—on the hamlet. Other times enemy aircraft led the assault, dropping loads of armour-piercing bombs, demolition bombs, blast bombs and antipersonnel bombs. In the first two weeks no one would venture out of the shelters and one's ears were deafened by the successive explosions. Later, people would take advantage of the rare lulls to make visits or go about their business. Activists and guerillas, however, had to stand by all the time.

A few days back enemy troops had been massed at the base in A.H. and at the road junction at K.L., and the villagers had drawn up plans to counter them. But the troops had gone away. Their hurried departure had been attributed to the heavy fighting in the Mekong River Delta, in Quang Tri, Thua Thien and Kontum.

In the hamlet, life was busier than ever. There were too many things to do and too little time for them. There was the fortification of the hamlet, the civil defence, the assignment of work, the training, the cultivation, the selection of seeds, the daily news broadcast, the health work, etc.

Everyone had his hands full, but nobody complained. All were moved by a high sense of responsibility and discipline, which showed their awareness of the urgency of the situation in which they had to confront the enemy.

MOTHER Tu had moved everything she had down into the underground A-shaped bomb-shelter, which was strengthened and covered on either side by trunks of coconut-trees and sheets of corrugated iron, all "supplied" by the US. There was just enough room for a plank bed to eat, sleep and receive visitors on. If too many people were staying overnight at one time the hostess could always manage to get extra by putting up a hammock just above the bed. The only trouble was that the person on the bed was likely to inconvenience the one above if he happened to put up his knees too high.

The clothes were stuffed into several bags to use also as pillows, while rice and salt were stored under the bed. These hardships notwithstanding, Mother Tu was very happy. "I enjoy independence and freedom now, don't I?" she said with pride.

After the meal she gave us a packet of American cigarettes.

"Smoke your fill," she said. "I still have some for the death anniversary of my husband. By the way, you should stay on for the occasion. My eldest son has sent me word of his leave, too. I haven't seen him since Ut Muu was four years old."

"As for Ba Tri, I wonder if he can find his way back," she went on after a while. I knew that her joy was not complete yet.

Then she stood up and wrapped a checkered scarf around her shoulders.

"How many places have you got, Mum?" Ut Muu looked up at her.

"Ten, including ours."

"How many more do you need?"

"Just two."

Noticing our perplexity, she explained:

"I'm making a round to see how many shelters can be available for the children's class"

"What? Do you mean you're organizing a class for the children? Are you serious?" I asked, incredulous.

"Why not? But the irony is that I'm illiterate and they want me to organize it. We'll, there must be at least two teachers to do the job decently."

"And where will you get them, the teachers?"

"I've sent a request to the district people and they are discussing the matter with the provincial committee. Pending their answer, I've got Bon, the treasurer and Pho, the barber. They can teach the kids what they know. Then we'll see what we can do next."

Turning to the boy, she said:

"And if you cannot talk your friends into going to school, I'll skin you alive."

"Don't worry about that, Mum," answered the boy.

Mother Tu looked at him and then at us, nodding with obvious satisfaction. She must be very pleased because, old as she was — 12 years Uncle Ho's junior, she could still make a modest contribution to the revolution.

Looking after her frail figure, which was vanishing into the half-light of the communication trench, I felt my heart swell with pride. I was proud to be one of the courageous inhabitants of the Hillock Hamlet.

NGUYEN VAN TRONG

My political commissar

My Political Commissar is old, as my father
And as gentle as my mother.
Still he looks very young with his smiling eyes
Only his hair is greying
Half because of long years of hardship
For he spent nights in prison cells
And long days in the resistance.
Rain or shine
He trekked through jungles and sea routes
His worn sandals taking him to all the battlefields.
Many times he narrowly escaped death
And several times got wounded.
Yet the remaining half of his hair is beautiful
(Like his soul always youthful).
Spared for these days of fierce struggle
He wears granddad glasses, yet fights very well.
No exploit was possible without his part.
He is the soul of my unit,
The leading bird flying ahead of his men.
We regard him as a next-of-kin
As our uncle, our brother in the soldiers' family
For he often comes among us
Swings in his hammock and chats with us for hours.
Few papers are seen on his table,
Seldom is his pistol hung at the Headquarters.
In each battle, however hard,
His laughter rings across the forward C.P.
Each times before the unit sets out to battle
Hearing his soft voice through the telephone
His rolling voice stronger than the rising storm
We feel as if our hearts had wings and we'd fly far,
Though my father's age
He keeps on calling us "comrades,"
He would listen to every word, every view of ours,
Piece them together, and turn them into stormy fire.
He felt glad when we fought well
But, staring through his glasses, warned us against complacency.
And when we felt low after a poorly fought battle
He'd grasp our hands and say, "Do better
in the next encounter!"
His face is pale from too frequent malaria
His broad shoulders somewhat are bent under work pressure.
When he drops the mosquito-net over his hammock
The wild cocks already are crowing,
Looking at him we feel worried
That the malaria virus might flatten him.
When doctors advised him to go to hospital
He said, "I've just had but a few fits."
For he wants nothing more
Than just an equal share of fire with us.
Wearing his several times broken granddad glasses
He's leading us to reap more and more victories.

DIEP MINH

It's me, rifle

Like a net cast over the whole area
The net of ground fire tries to get low-flying planes.
Fire to the East, fire to the West,
From all sides fire encircles the intruders.
"Who shot down the plane?"
"It's me, rifle, together with Brothers AA."

X.V.

Operation stick

With a bamboo stick we march into battle
Even if we were to go to Heaven we need not wings.
During breaks we delight in a puff
The sweet smoke rises at the other end of the stick, up to the hilltop.
From afar come notes from a flute
Entwined in the gurgle of the soldier's water pipe.

Y. V.

A little love from mother

These bullets I took from the posts.
Over so many years I picked them up, and kept them one by one.
When you returned I came and saw you,
I sat and talked, telling stories near and far
Of GI's who came and burned houses,
Arrested people, plundered, took pigs and poultry.
Holding your hands, I felt deep love.
I gave you bullet after bullet, as a long treasured gift.
You went to free our land.
I rejoice at the news that you've beaten the Yanks.
This is a little love from Mother of the lowlands

TO HAI

WE'LL CLIMB A THOUSAND PASSES

The first slope you climb always seems steep
But after the second time, it looks more gentle.
The long road winds through mountain after mountain,
Even so our legs are not tired.
However hard, however tiresome,
Once we're out to free our land, we'll climb a thousand passes.

P. T.

Night march in the rain

The rain is falling, but it will stop soon,
Rain and shine, shine and rain, that's Heaven's affair.
For us, marching with a heavy kitbag
We think all about training our legs.
Before long, our legs will harden and our shoulders will no longer feel the burden.
Even ten thousand miles or a hundred nights won't frighten us.
We'll force the high mountains to kneel down
And split the deep rivers to go all our way.

K. C.

*

OUR IRON-LIKE DETERMINATION

The Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam on December 16 issued a statement denouncing the Nixon administration for delaying the signing of the peace agreement, dragging on its war of aggression and prolonging the US involvement in South Viet Nam.

The statement reads in full as follows:

AS agreed upon by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the US government, peace should have been restored in Viet Nam. But due to the US government's about-face, thus far the "Agreemeent on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Viet Nam" has not yet been signed, and the US war of aggression is still dragging on more fiercely. To soothe the wave of indignation that has been sweeping the world, and even the United States, the Nixon administration, resorting to many tricky ploys, has created illusions, about its "goodwill for peace" and about "an early end to the Viet Nam war." In fact however, the US still refuses to give up its design of aggression, continues the war and prolong the US involvement in South Viet Nam.

In the past few weeks, the US has massively sent tens of thousands of tons of modern weapons and war means to South Viet Nam while hastily handing over to the Saigon puppet army the whole network of US militant bases in South Viet Nam which should have been dismantled by the US. More serious still, the US has frantically rigged a huge military machine in South Viet Nam, and sent tens of thousands of its disguised military advisers to continue commanding the Saigon army to fight as a mercenary of the US.

The US aggressors and their stooges have launched a series of operations to savagely massacre the South Vietnamese people, and used B.52s to carry out extermination bombings in many densely populated areas, including the vicinity of Saigon. At the same time they have stepped up their air raids against North Viet Nam by ordering aircraft to carpet-bomb many areas from Thanh Hoa province to Vinh Linh region.

Frightened at the burning anger of the people, ever more isolated, and on order from his US bosses, Nguyen Van Thieu has enforced a series of fascist laws, carried out downright repression, arrested and massacred anyone who favors peace and national concord. including members of the "opposition" political forces, and conducted an utterly inhuman campaign aimed at maiming and destroying patriotic and peace-loving people illegally detained by them in all prisons across South Viet Nam.

Obviously, the US imperialists obdurately persist in their "Vietnamamization of the war" policy and their neo-colonialism in South Viet Nam. Precisely because of these dark designs the US has delayed the signing of the "Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Viet Nam" reached on October 20, 1972. Moreover, it schemes to revise the content of the agreement. Meanwhile stringed by the US, the Thieu puppet administration has ceaselessly "objected" to the signing of the Agreement, thus causing "difficulties" for the negotiations. Nguyen Van Thieu's most brazen move came on December 12, 1972 when he publicly rejected all the basic provisions of the Agreement.

The US aggressors and Thieu keep on raising what they call the "question of withdrawal of North Vietnamese troops from South Viet Nam" as the "basic" condition for a peace settlement.

As everybody knows, the US itself had introduced over half a million US troops and troops of US satellites to invade South Viet Nam and conducted a war of destruction against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, thus piling up heinous crimes on both zones of Viet Nam. It is natural, therefore, that the US must end its war of aggression, and withdraw all US troops and those of its satellites from South Viet Nam without setting any condition. As for the Vietnamese people who are fighting against US aggression anywhere on their homeland, they are justly exercising the sacred self-defence right to which all nations are entitled.

In their national salvation fight against the US aggressors for more than ten years now, the South Vietnamese people have built up a firm and strong revolutionary administration and powerful liberation armed forces comprising the best sons of the Vietnamese people among them combatants and sons of the South Vietnamese people who had regrouped to the North and have returned to fight on their native land. The PLAF, born from the people and boundlessly loved by the entire nation, have always been fighting gallantly under the glorious banner of the NFL and the guidance of the PRG of the Republic of South Viet Nam against the US aggressors, and have defeated all the US war strategies.

This is a great and undeniable reality.

By demanding the "withdrawal of North Vietnamese troops from South Viet Nam," the US government and the Thieu puppet administration not only want to erase the line between the aggressors and those who resist aggression, but also refuse to recognize the sacred resistance of the South Vietnamese people. In essence, this is a scheme to destroy the South Vietnamese people's patriotic liberation armed forces while the US hurriedly beefs up the puppet army and tries by all possible means to leave behind in South Viet Nam tens of thousands of US military advisors disguised as "civilians." This is an extremely absurd demand which the South Vietnamese flatly reject.

The US aggressors and Thieu have claimed for the "restoration of the demilitarized zone." Everybody knows that as stipulated by the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam, the military demarcation line along the 17th parallel is only a provisional one, and should not in any way be considered as a political or territorial boundary. Also under these agreements, Viet Nam should have been reunified by 1956. But the US has sabotaged these agreements, grossly violated the statute of the DMZ, waged a war of aggression against South Viet Nam, and conducted a war of destruction against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

Now the US-Thieu demand for the "restoration of the DMZ" is clearly aimed at realizing their dark design to turn the provisional military demarcation line into a territorial boundary, perpetuate the partition of Viet Nam into a separate country under the US neo-colonialist domination. This design completely cuts across the Vietnamese people's aspiration for peaceful reunification of their country and unquestionably is opposed by the entire Vietnamese people.

The US and Thieu now pose the problem of "right to self-determination" of the South Vietnamese people in a way entirely contrary to the principles laid down in the Agreement reached on October 20, 1972. They have denied the reality that there now exist two administrations in South Viet Nam. They want to impose on the South Vietnamese people the reactionary regime of the Saigon puppets, comprising all the repressive and coercive machine and fascist laws created by Thieu. Heedless of the hatred and contempt of the Vietnamese people and the progressive people, they arrogantly consider the Saigon puppet administration, an off-spring of US neo-colonialism, as the "only lawful and constitutional administration." They oppose the principle of equality with the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam, authentic administration of the South Vietnamese people which has a very high prestige and position in the international arena, has been solemnly recognized by, and enjoys the sympathy and support of, all the socialist countries and nationalist countries. They also deny the existence of the third force comprising persons belonging to political and religious tendencies that do not side either with the Saigon administration or with the PRG of the Republic of South Viet Nam.

According to the agreement reached on October 20, to materialize their right of self-determination, the South Viet Nam people will decide on the political future of South Viet Nam through really free and democratic elections; the two sides in South Viet Nam, namely the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam and the Saigon administration, have to ensure democratic liberaties to the people, materialize national reconciliation and concord, set up a National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord and such councils at the various levels comprising three equal segments.

By rejecting these fair and reasonable principles, the US and Thieu have sapped the basis for the building of a stable and lasting peace in South Viet Nam.

Along with acts to intensify the war, the above-mentioned arrogant demands put forth by the US and Thieu have further exposed the US scheme to continue realizing its "Vietnamization of the War" policy, prolonging its involvement in South Viet Nam, perpetuating the partition of Viet Nam, and turning South Viet Nam into a new-type colony of the US.

The Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam condemns with vehemence the said scheme and manoeuvre of the US, resolutely demands that the Nixon administration end its war of aggression and its involvement in South Viet Nam, stop backing the Nguyen Van Thieu puppet administration, and sign immediately the Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Viet Nam reached on October 20, 1972.

The Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam declares that it will thoroughly respect and scrupulously implement this agreement once it is signed, and will immediately hold consultations with the Saigon administration to solve together the internal affairs of South Viet Nam in the spirit of equality, mutual respect, mutual non-elimination, elimination of all enmity, and realization of national reconciliation and concord.

If the US government and the Saigon administration maintain their double-crossing attitude, stubbornly cling to their arrogant demands to drag on the negotiations, and to prolong and intensify the war of aggression, then the South Viet Nam people, united millions as one man and living up to the sacred Last Wishes of the great President Ho Chi Minh, are resolved, together with the people across the country and shoulder to shoulder with the Cambodian and Lao peoples, to fight and completely defeat the US imperialist aggressors and their henchmen.

No brutal force, no tricky move of the US imperialists can shake the iron-like determination of the heroic South Viet Nam people.

The people and Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam earnestly call upon the peoples and governments of the socialist countries, non aligned countries and all peace- and justice-loving countries and international organizations and the people all over the world to struggle in all suitable forms to demand that the US government sign immediately the "Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Viet Nam," and to increase their support to the South Viet Nam people's just struggle till total victory.

The people and Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam call upon the American people, for the sake of peace and justice, for the honor and legitimate interests of the United States, to step up their struggle to demand that the US government end its criminal war of aggression in Viet Nam and Indochina and sign the agreement that has been reached so that all the sons of America may soon return home and that the United States and Viet Nam may move into a new period, that of peace and friendship in their relations.

The struggle for peace, national independence, democracy and national concord of the South Viet Nam people will be crowned with glorious victory!

&bullient days

Excerpts from
HAI NGOC'S *diary*

September 28

Again we could not sleep tonight... Our mimeograph was turning at regular speed. Leaflets came out like a long stream. Yen fanned the ink dry without let-up for the sheets to be immediately wrapped up and sent away, messengers of the feelings of all of us. Tomorrow they would be scattered all over the city... This small room, located deep in a quiet lane, had used to be our meeting place when exams were approaching. It was exceptionally bustling tonight, and tonight many people in this Da Nang city must also be awake.

A *Honda* roared to a halt, then Thanh and Quy pushed the door open : one was carrying a parcel and the other a bucket.

Both were assailed with questions : "You've got rubber tyres and jellied petrol, haven't you ?" "How resourceful you are, but how much did you pay for it ?"

"Not a cent ! The Drivers' Trade Union gave it !" said Thanh throwing his parcel on the floor.

His answer was greeted by a unanimous cheer.

September 29

For the last few days the sea had been rather rough. Billows rolled from afar at full speed on the uniformly blue water, then angrily splashed against the foot of Mount Son Tra churning up snow-white foam. No fresh fish was available in Han Market, but the city was crowded with policemen from Hoi An and Saigon. Would they like to stain our poetic city with the presence of their spotted uniforms ? We were fully aware that Da Nang was in effervescence and each of us had to do his bit in this general upheaval.

In the streets, Thieu's portraits were smeared out with black paint by students, and new ones pasted on walls had eyes holed by children's catapults and were stuck upon one another and peeled off by passers-by. The Saigon president's face became thicker and thicker as posters were superimposed upon each other. Thieu was thus exposed on walls and fences, trampled underfoot in alleys and on sidewalks, thrown into the gutter, burnt to ashes along with all kinds of refuse and flying in the clouds of dust raised by careering police-cars.

"US must withdraw its troops !" "Down with US agent Thieu"... Our leaflets were now all over cross-roads, before the seat of the Invalids' Association and the main pagoda of the city Buddhists' League. They looked bright on the sunny walls of schools, and fluttered in the wind blowing on Bach Dang Avenue from the *Han* River... They had blanketed with white all-streets and alleys. The city was now ours !

October 1

We swang into action, with the same enthusiasm and calmness as it was beginning of term : we were joined by Saigon invalids walking on crutches, with only one arm or leg left, claiming their right to live ; by ample robed Buddhist priests counting their beads ; by hammer-carrying workers and stick-brandishing citizens of Da Nang.

Many streets seemed asleep. Rolls of cold barbed wire were lying about. Large-open windows looked out like iuquisitive eyes. The market place was deserted and empty stalls showed only piles of wooden benches and stools. Schools were closed. Tables and cupboards were heaped at cross-roads, with some broken as they had been flung from high-up floors. In the midst of this unusual barricade, a big blackboard displayed the following slogan painted in white "Oppose Thieu for adequate food and clothing" ; right beneath was an uncompleted solution of a problem of logarithm written in chalk. I saw Thanh standing in face of the blackboard, murmuring something like a tentative solution to the problem. Yen patted his shoulder and said with a smile : "Let's kick out fhe Yanks and all problems will be solved."

A posse of policemen, M16 guns in hands and round shields on their left hands, were standing by, truculent. The only Vietnamese feature about them was precisely their rattan shields.

We and the policemen were now pulling up closer to one another and what we had expected was about to happen. The weapons used were the same as on previous occasions ; tear gas-grenades, bludgeons... on their side ; stones, bricks, sticks, crutches... on ours. In successive human waves, we drove away the pigs. The Information car standing on the street side was now in flame, and its dented loudspeaker was lying on the ground. We noticed a streamer hung across the streets with a blatantly pro-Thieu slogan on it, all of us felt infuriated. As I saw Thanh running toward a tree, I rushed up and offered him my shoulders. Anxious eyes followed his movements : he had climbed on the tree and, in no time, snapped broken the string supporting the streamer which crumpled down like a battered snake. Only now did this scene cath the policemen's eyes. A M-16 was pointed upward. I cried out : "Thanh !" Hardly had I finished calling when a petrol bomb was thrown by Quy. When it reached the gunner's feet, a column of smoke rose up and wrapped him in a cloud. Thanh slid down from the tree. I heaved a sigh of relief and hugged Quy.

October 3

For the first time we fought with armoured cars... They were advancing very slowly, crushing the barbed wire rolls and shaking the ground. We dashed forward with our Molotov cocktails. The enemy cars spit fire and sent out a volley of bullets. Trees fell down cracking. Walls hit by bullets were reduced into rubble by big portions. Car horns shrieked. We closed our ranks. The policemen groped their way forward, and the armoured cars continued their blind advance. We brandished our Molotov cocktails, then hurled them at one, whipping up a barrage in front of us. Tear-gas grenades thrown by policemen fell on the ground ; a one-arm invalid picked them up in succession and hurled 6 of them back at the cops. On the seventh, he lost balance and tumbled — prey to an assaulting group of policemen, but they were soon kicked aside by Thanh and Quy, while I retreated with my megaphone firm in hand. A police flanked me. A driver's hand waved a crank and my assailant was knocked down. I shouted : "Well done, comrade driver !" The policemen were pushed aside. The enemy tanks revved up and rushed on us, their tracks rattling frenziedly. We fought a hand-to-hand combat with the policemen while withdrawing behind a barricade previously erected in a small lane. My voice became hoarse with shouting : "Better die here than give up an inch !" We stood close to one another so as to form a real barricade. Next to us a bonze in his saffron robe was lying motionless on the pavement ; behind him, Buddhist students calmly squatted in a row. The vehicles were now forced to stop after a few yards' advance. The policemen picked up the Buddhist students one by one to clear the way for the tanks but the young men obstinately flung themselves down. Loose beads and crushed steel helmets littered on the ground. From behind the pile of tables and benches a lad emerged, raising his hand-grenade, and chanted rhythmically: "Look at my grenade! grenade !" The policemen drew back. The child hurled stones at them, and at that moment I recognized him as the bread-vendor who a few days ago had taken part in our burning of US cars. Through my megaphone, I warned him : "Take care, younger brother !"

From the top of his barricades, he looked at me, winking knowingly : "Don't worry. I will give them plenty of 'bread.'" Then he smiled broadly. Hand-grenade and gun smoke mixed with sweat draw on his face long black lines which made him look all the more mischievous. His lips quivered as if he were singing. I could not help thinking of Do Ba Dinh, a heroic teen-ager of the city, during the "76 historic days." It seemed to me I still heard these words of his : "I don't know to handle a gun, but do give me a hand-grenade because the enemy is still there !" I remembered him climb up a many-storied building and fling down the grenade he had just received, wiping out a machinegun nest and killing four Saigon soldiers at the New Market Cross-road. The policemen were still very aggressive. The tanks seemed stopped short by the bonzes who refused to step back half-an-inch. From behind, an armoured car darted forward. Through its top hole, we recognized Khoi. Angry shouts were uttered in unison : "Down with Khoi, the hireling ! Down with Khoi !"

Khoi's face turned livid and sweated profusely. He signalled an order. As the armoured cars revved up, the cops jumped on board, but had their bludgeons and guns snatched by the crowd who shouted : "Will you be brutal enough to crush even Buddhist monks?" "Look ! We have been fighting to save you from death in Cambodia and Laos and your family from becoming beggars. Would you then shoot at those who fight for you and your families ? Your enemy is over there."

The crowd pointed their finger at Khoi. He whipped out his revolver and ordered : "Fire !" The policemen raised their guns.

"Fire !" Khoi shouted again.

"Shoot at him, brothers !" replied the crowd.

The men in uniform hesitated. Two shots were fired. A policeman in the first row collapsed. A Thieu's portrait with its mouth stuffed with a "Salem" cigarette by someone was looking at Khoi who shuts the trap door. The armoured cars rolled on. Bullets flew over our heads. The bread vendor standing on the barricade hurled his only hand-grenade, his body bent forward. But suddenly he was knocked down with blood oozing through his clothes. Thanh rushed up to him and carried his body high above his own head. Boiling with hatred I shouted through the megaphone : "Avenge Do Ba Binh." I didn't understand why I call this bread vendor Do Ba Binh's name.

We rushed forward, filled with affliction and anger. Tear-gas grenades were thrown at us in successive waves. A screen of smoke rose around us. It was noon time but one could hardly see anything. Canvas bags were brought in a hurry by women, old and young, to put down the flames. I felt an acute pain on my heavy eyelids. Remembering that a Da Nang woman had given me this morning some lemons which I still kept in my pocket. I lost no time in rubbing my eye-lids with the juice of the fruit. Light has now come back to me, a miraculous gift from that woman. It seems to me I now saw clearer the nature of our enemy : He was in his death throes. I also realized my own strength and the strength of all our Da Nang people. We marched forward in closed ranks. Our enemy was in a complete confusion.

On the TRUONG SON RANGE

It rained heavily. It was the 26th day of wet weather. The soil no longer showed any capacity of absorbing water. The brook kept swelling day and night. The road was covered knee-deep with sticky mud. Vehicles had great trouble climbing slippery slopes. At times axles and wheels themselves churned the soil into mud. Now even this "two-river three-mountain" road (lorries' wheels had dug two drains dividing the road into three ridges) was hardly recognizable.

If you stood at K58 and looked in the direction of the "hot spot," the road looked like a red ribbon zigzagging through crater-dotted hills. Trees burned and bent down by US-Thieu toxic chemicals, and bombs were gigantic black spikes bristling on both sides.

In this section more than in others, the road was ploughed up again and again by enemy bombs, and in many places a new layer of metal was again upturned. Carcases of overturned lorries could be found here and there. Teams of vanguard youths were seen busying themselves draining off water, providing the road with a new stone surface, defusing enemy land-mines, etc.

"Think that this is but one section of the Ho Chi Minh trail network," I said to myself.

At E. crossroad, I met Do Ngan, Commander of Company 6. He was assisted by Deputy Commander Bao and Section Chief Thu. They were in the thick of the "rainy season campaign" and their uniforms were splashed all over with mud. Shaking hands with me, he said, smiling:

"Mai's just phoned me that you were to visit our unit. But unfortunately we are now busy with planting marks on a road bend. The road is so muddy!" "Never mind, I replied," I just intended to come and see you at work."

After discussing business with Bao for five minutes, Ngan took me to the "eleven-metre turn."

Standing by the side of a steel-pellet bomb container and another unexploded bomb, he acquainted me with the road section his company was in charge of. He explained to me the origin of this "eleven-metre turn." At first, the road curved into a small bend about 2 metres long, but year after year, the bend was repeatedly hit by bombs from B.52s and all kinds of jet planes. Each time, our vanguard youths had to widen the road, not on the side of the ravine but by cutting into the rock. And now the bend had gained eleven metres on the mountain. I was informed by Ngan that at this "hot spot," each metre of road had to stand four or five US bombs. The enemy had launched 1,000 attacks here, and yet traffic was not halted even for a single night. Our road-keepers on the "hot spot" often reminded each other: "We should look after the road as we would do our own bodies."

Ngan told me about some of the most furious strikes.

That day saw an accurate B.52 bombing. Section 1 had moved into a cave located in what we call the "bomb pocket." They had spent several days and nights without food and sleep defusing bombs and maintaining the road. Section Chief Kich and girl deputy chief Binh together with five other comrades had laid down their lives before the unit succeeded in getting convoys through the "hot spot."

It was 3.30 p.m. some day in early August. The silent mountains and forests were suddenly shaken with force. Enemy planes were heard screeching overhead. Columns of dark smoke rose up in succession all along the road. Scouts Tung, Trac, Tuan... calmly followed the flight of air planes, counted every bomb as it fell down, marked damaged road sections and places that had received time magnetic bombs.

"Hello! Hello!" shouted Tung in a hoarse voice, his body bent over the field telephone, "Is it 76? Is it 76?"

As he got no answer, he laid down the receiver and walked out of the underground shelter, visibly disturbed. He took his AK, fired three times into the air to announce that traffic had been cut off, then ran at full speed to report to the Command. While running he kept an eye on the enemy planes and tried to dodge steel-pellet and time-bombs which littered the road.

As Tung was reporting to the Command, the latter received another report relayed from the scouting team: five F4s had dropped 40 steel-pellet, time magnetic and explosive bombs to prevent us from repairing the road.

So the traffic was sealed off.

It was 5 p.m. and the high peaks on the Long Range were gradually wrapped in a dense fog. Outside the shelter, night was falling. In the shelter, a short pow-wow was held by the company Command. Their eyes looked anxious, but determination was apparent in all of them.

Political Commissar Chinh banged his hand on the bullet case: "Traffic must be re-opened at any cost!"

He was approved by Company Commander Ngan and his deputies Hai, Du, Bao,

The meeting ended, and the participants walked out of the shelter and with a well-defined responsibility: Hai was to pick out men for the defusing of magnetic bombs and clearing of the way towards the "hot spot"; Du to prepare rudimentary tools to neutralize time bombs, and Ngan to check the bulldozers and cut a path towards N.

The whole company in no time gathered on the road.

It was growing darker and darker. Everyone was urged to speed up his work, and yet the fight against US planes required meticulous calculations.

A recon plane flew over the area, dropped five ominous flares, then vanished.

In the light of the enemy flares, Hai, Du and their men neutralized all the bombs. Flashes of light spurted up from steel-pellet and time bombs. From time to time a detonation was heard as a magnetic bomb was defused.

Hai was busy with a hard bomb when he heard a voice from below: "Comrade Hai! May I report that Ngoc..."

Hai did not hear distinctly the rest, too absorbed as he was by his work.

"Du, could you find out who was calling? he said in a near whisper.

Cupping one of his ears, Du listened attentively and said: "It is nurse Hoan."

"What is the matter?"

"Ngoc has been killed, and Luc seriously wounded."

"What! Ngoc is dead?" Hai was startled and rendered speechless.

As Hoan was shouting for help, Dam rushed down to her. He took Luc on his shoulders and ran out of the danger spot. Hoan was now along; she was both frightened and grieved by Ngoc's death. Tears were rolling down on her cheeks without her knowing it.

The situation grew tenser with every passing minute. Men had been killed or wounded, and yet the bomb craters were still there, gaping challenges. It was now time they had to use spades and hands to fill up those craters since it would take too much time for bulldozers to arrive. The members of Section 2 bent all their strength on the job. One, two, then three craters were filled. There was only one left now. Everybody was delighted with the speed when an intelligence report announced that a new bombing by co-ordinate-reading had scored a direct hit at K76 with two bombs.

Having no time to consult their comrades, Hai and Du dashed to the pungent bomb craters. Fire was climbing up the trees, Hai cast a glance round and said to Du: "I think we can use dynamite to fill the craters."

"Wait till I've fetched some light," replied Du who climbed a blazing tree.

Four hours had elapsed. The whole road section was humming with activity: the crater-filling job was near completion. And now, all along the road, traffic-reopening was announced by gun shots.

That was what had been done on the previous day.

Today on this "hot spot," I could witness Company 6 at work. A bomb crater 25 metres wide, 4—5 metres deep, cut a road section right in a rocky part. Company Commander Ngan was driving a bulldozer which inched cautiously towards the crater. Ngan asked Tru to lower the blade and gingerly ran his bulldozer against the road bank. The machine revved up, its tracks crushed the stones, but it could not move an inch forward. Ngan realized that his machine was of no use. He stepped down. Some one suggested to drill a hole in the rock and use a petard. Some other said a stone-loaded lorry should be signalled in from C. The thing kept on revving, filling the air with the smell of oil and lubricant. Ngan was standing silent in the dark. He pointed his electric torch toward the rocky wall, then glanced at his bulldozer and his mates. He knitted his brows. On his pale face, one could see better his unshaved beard. Everyone was waiting for his words. His brows were now relaxed. Turning to his comrades, he said: "We will cut a detour on the side of the bank. Of course that will be dangerous, the road will be 1m20 to 1m50 the lower but we can't help it."

Deputy Commander Bao, the man in charge of the technical end here, checked again and again the bank with his electric torch, then gave his opinion: "I agree with Comrade Ngan, but we must plant marks."

"And what's your view, Comrade Loc?" Ngan asked the chief of Group 2.

"When the side path is completed, we will stand here to serve as live marks for the lorries," said Loc.

The noise of spades and shovels at work mingled with the revving of the bulldozer and the talks and laughter of the members of Group 2. One hour five minutes later, they were through with their job. The convoy of supplies passed over bomb craters between two rows of live marks. Under-chassis lights followed in Indian file. Greetings and questions were exchanged between men whose faces were hardly visible: "Hello, countrymen!" "Hello! Good luck!"

Truong Son, September 1972

KHUAT THU HA

VIET NAM WILL WIN

(Continued from page 1)

more ruthless, more brutal and more vicious than the one before, all of them however prompted by a losing position. It is safe to say that the process has been a series of US setbacks.

US objective in this country has been to make of its southern part a US military base and a neo-colony. It has turned into a nightmare. An independent, peaceful and neutral South Viet Nam led by the National Front for Liberation is standing firm in Southeast Asia, in the teeth of incredible hardships and all adverse military adventures.

All its strategies and tactics, instead of helping achieve its objective have inflicted on the US unprecedented aftermaths in the history of imperialist wars. One of the most obvious consequences is that several hundred thousand defeated Americans have become invalids and drug addicts.

US intervention in Viet Nam will cast a deep gloom on many pages of US history. Looking back on the process of American aggression. Time Magazine (Nov. 6) wrote : "Quite aside from emotional anguish Viet Nam's legacy to the US includes a massive list of domestic problems long deferred : schools, housings, jobs, public health, environment, all of the social need, that the war superseded." In addition, war escalation has aggravated unemployment (6% of the nation's labour force), inflation (3% annually), poverty (1,5 million people listed as "poor" over the past two years), robbery and crime (10% annually). Degrading have also been US industrial output, the dollar's value, the balance of payments, foreign trade and, more generally, the position and role of the US in the world. Washington's allies have been seeking to extricate themselves from its sphere of influence and even to surpass the US : Japan and West Germany have become rivals to be seriously reckoned with. Meanwhile the mounting national-liberation movement has been spearheading its assaults on American imperialism, and the emergence of a Third World outside the American orbit has undoubtedly compounded its isolation still more serious.

In brief, the Viet Nam war has been one of the main causes of the United States serious economic and financial instability attended by an acute moral and political crisis and credibility gap.

The war in Viet Nam is unquestionably one of the costliest in US history in terms of human lives and resources. It has also smeared the good name of the American people attached by tradition to peace and justice.

SUCH a situation compelled the Nixon administration to enter into negotiations and to reach in October 1972 an agreement on ending the war and restoring peace in Viet Nam. Nevertheless, this accord has not yet been signed and Washington has been doing its utmost to realize an over-all plan for the continuation of "Vietnamization" and for the preservation of its neo-colonialist rule in the South.

At the bargaining table the American representatives have been pretexting the Thieu clique's Washington prompted absurd arguments to postpone the signing of the agreement and call to question its basic principles, namely : US respect for Viet Nam's independence sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity, termination of US military involvement in South Viet Nam, acknowledgement of the characteristics of the present situation is South Viet Nam existence of two administrations, two armies and three political forces, formation of a tripartite National Committee of Reconciliation and Concord, and enforcement of democratic freedoms in South Viet Nam.

What issues has Thieu raised ? He has been insisting on "troop withdrawal by the North." re-estabbishment of the demiliturized zone, "no coalition government"... In his Dec. 11 declaration his Foreign Minister Tran Van Lam emphasized that Saigon's peace conditions remained unchanged. The following day, Thieu himself shamelessly stated before his National Assembly that the terms for a serious settlement should imply the "distinction between South and North including the recognition of, and respect for, the demilitarized zone and the 17th parallel," the "withdrawal of all North Vietnamese troops to the North because they are an army of aggression from outside," etc. Transparently enough what Thieu has said reflects US intentions and US desire not to end its involvement, to maintain its neo-colonialist domination in South Viet Nam.

All that explains Washington's volte-face and sabotage of what has been agreed upon just before the deadline for the signing of the cease-fire.

Immediately after the agreement was reached, under which the US pledged to stop its military involvement, Washington started "the biggest airlift in the history of the Indochina war" to pour into South Viet Nam dozens of thousands of tons of war materials, including several hundred aeroplanes of various types to raise the Saigon air force to "the world's third largest" (2,000) rank. Many US military bases have been handed over to the Thieu regime for the continuation of the war. More gravely, while all of US troops have not pulled out of the South, thousands of military advisers disguised as "technical personnel," "diplomatic officers" have been sent in, let alone the beefing up of American forces off the Vietnamese coast and the intensified use of American bases in Asia for war purposes in Viet Nam. Very clearly US military involvement has been increasing. A US field officer disclosed on Nov. 3 : A cease-fire in Viet Nam will not end the US presence here even though all US troops will have withdrawn.

Who is the aggressor ? The facts cited above have once again shown that the US and nobody else is. US intentions and war acts have been at the bottom of the grave situation in South Viet Nam at present and of the prolonged sufferings of the Vietnamese and American peoples. Therefore, to re-establish genuine peace in Viet Nam and end those sufferings, the US government should stop its aggression and involvement in every form in Viet Nam and Indochina and pull out all its troops and war materials.

There cannot be question of mutual withdrawal. One cannot put on the same footing the aggressor and the victim of aggression. Resisting aggression is the Vietnamese people's right to self-defence, the unprescriptible right of all oppressed and dominated peoples. To raise the question of "the North's aggression" and "mutual troop withdrawal" is to return to the old stalemate in negotiations, to revert to an old trick for intensifying the war. The US government should bear full responsibility for all the consequences of its bellicose actions and devious methods.

Under the cease-fire agreement the US recognized the existence of two administrations, two armies and three political forces in the South. Now the Nixon government is manœuvring to deny this. It is sparing no efforts to consolidate the Thieu administration into an instrument for stepping up hostilities, a fact borne out by unending encroaching operations against the liberated zone, brutal pacification raids combined with the suppression of democratic freedoms, fascist repression against the population in urban centres and the occupied areas as a whole, assassinations of patriots, peace partisans and detained opposition members. All that spells out US intention to go on using Thieu with a view to neutralizing all political, spiritual and social forces standing for peace and national concord, destroying the revolutionary armed forces, and liquidating the Provisional Revolutionary Government.

For many years the deluge of bombs and bullets coupled with countless artful moves have been unable to bring to fruition the scheme of the US imperialists and Saigon administration. The Provisional Revolutionary Government is an undeniable reality, a people's power born of the people's revolutionary high tides, trusted and defended with might and main by the people. Enjoying great credit in the international arena, it has established diplomatic relations with many governments, has been recognized by 64 Third-World nations as an official member of non-aligned countries, and is benefiting from the active support and aid of a wide range of international and regional organizations.

As for the Nguyen Van Thieu administration, it has shown itself more clearly with each passing day as a handful of US-paid arch-reactionaries who have invited foreign aggressors in to trample upon their fatherland. They are hated by the people, protested and condemned by world public opinion, and have no legal and social bases to survive on. Their very presence at the top of the administration is a brazen challenge to the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination. So its removal is necessary to the termination of the war, and the restoration of peace, to the enforcement of the people's fundamental national rights and genuine right to self-determination. The South Vietnamese people, the National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government are entitled to such a claim.

Nonetheless, motivated by the NFL spirit of national concord, the PRG has recognized the Saigon regime as one of the three political forces in South Viet Nam and agreed to the formation of a three-component National Committee of Reconciliation and Concord with it as one component. Such a realistic view point and good will precisely aims at a rapid settlement of the South Vietnamese problem. But striving to strengthen the Thieu administration and plotting to do away with the PRG, the US has unveiled its intention to preserve its outmoded neo-colonialist rule in South Viet Nam. It is the determination of the South Vietnamese people to thwart this naked attempt to impose American domination. They demand that the US government pay due consideration to the realities of South Viet Nam and settle all political questions with due regard for them.

The PRG is the product of the South Vietnamese people's resistance against American aggression, for the reconquest of independence and liberty. It is the highest revolutionary achievement scored by the South Vietnamese under the national-salvation banner of the NFL. It symbolizes the genuine right to self-determination of the South Vietnamese. No reactionary force, no brutality, no machiavellian scheme can obscure this truth.

RALLYING under the patriotic banner of the National Front for Liberation, the South Vietnamese people have been perseveringly and courageously fighting for more than ten years for independence and freedom. More than anyone else they have at heart peace and the end of the war. But they will not accept peace in slavery. They urge that the US government immediately sign the agreement already reached, withdraw its troops from Viet Nam, wind up its involvement in the South, really respect their right to self-determination and Viet Nam's genuine independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity. They are possessed of plenty of goodwill but also of determination. If the US indefinitely puts off the signing of the cease-fire accord to buy time for strengthening the Nguyen Van Thieu administration, for prolonging its involvement and maintaining its neo-colonialist rule, the South Vietnamese people will be forced to carry on their battle to a finish.

The South Viet Nam National Front is the organizer and leader of all the successes of the South Vietnamese. Keenly aware of the strength of their unity and of the potentiality of the people's war, the South Vietnamese pledge, on this founding anniversary of the Front, to pursue their effort with perseverance and resolve, and achieve at any cost their fundamental national rights : independence, democracy, peace, neutrality and prosperity pending reunification of their country.

The position of the NFL and PRG is sound and clear-cut. The cause of the South Vietnamese people is radiant with justice, their position is steady and their strength upgrading. They enjoy wholehearted support and help from their friends the world over. They have a firm sense of purpose. They will surely win.

The more the US aggressors wriggle, the more crafty and obstinate they grow, the further they get into the impasse. Their posture is on the downgrade and their strength on the wane. Their estrangement is worsening in the world and in the US itself. Their total failure is a certainty.

SOUTH VIET NAM

Out of sight, *not* out of mind

"Out of sight, out of mind," So goes a proverb in the West. It however does not sound very sensible to Vietnamese, especially to those living far from the homeland. Distance only deepens their attachment to it.

"I live here but my thoughts are always turned home," Mrs H. told me during a *Tet* get-together held by Vietnamese residents in Bordeaux in 1970.

The oval-faced woman, in her traditional long tunic Nam Bo style with a checkered kerchief around her neck, murmured a secret into my ear, over the *Tet* dinner of that year, "My French husband is a doctor, a former practitioner in Saigon. I have named my own terms: we'd cease being man and wife unless he opposed US aggression and supported Viet Nam." There were all the dishes traditional in Viet Nam at this time of the year — *banh chung* or steamed "cake" made of glutinous rice, *bun thang* or Vietnamese vermicelli soup, *banh phong tom*—grilled "shrimp" cake, *cha gio* or fried crab-stuffed rolls, stewed-dry fish, soya aprout salad... I took this opportunity to engage in conversation with a young Frenchman. To my great surprise, he answered in Vietnamese unmistakable with an Nam Bo accent. He was Mrs H.'s son.

Before we returned to Paris, Mrs H. handed over to us a sum of 1,500 N.F., as a contribution to the National Resistance Fund. It was the proceeds of the sale of mush-rooms collected in the forests by Vietnamese women residing in Bordeaux on sundays.

Le Voviet

A cocktail party was given in Ivry on the occasion of the Solidarity Day with Viet Nam. A young Frenchman, after paying tribute to the industriousness, ingenuity and intelligence of the Vietnamese people, asked whether I knew *Le Voviet*. I racked my brain for the meaning of this French word, but in vain. Full of pity for me, he exclaimed, "But it's just Vietnamese boxing!" So, it was *Voviet* pronounced à la française! He turned out to be an enthusiastic admirer of this type of boxing, and he himself had gone in for it. I wondered who in this distant country had tried to propagate this age-old Vietnamese national sport and I felt a strong urge to meet him. The chance came at *Tet* 1971 when some friends and I were invited to a "family dinner" by Mr Vo Viet himself. That afternoon we arrived at a narrow street in the French capital. We stepped into a small room packed with young Frenchmen and women. It was full of cigarette smoke and laughter. Mr Vo Viet, (let us content ourselves with this name) in a happy mood, shook hands with us. A man of nearly 60, he still looked robust and alert. We could exchange only a few words as he soon excused himself. Preparations for the dinner being underway, there was a real need of his assistance. There were about 200 youths in this small room. They sat close on benches, chatting merrily. The secretary of the *Voviet* League gave me some interesting information. Mr Vo Viet who was born in Bac Ninh province, left for France in the 2nd World War as a member of the *ONS* (unskilled worker) contingent. He is now running many boxing clubs in Paris, and the young men seen in the room this afternoon were all *Voviet* coaches. They were of French, British, Italian, Canadian and even Arab nationality. I also learned that qualification for initiation required nothing in money or in kind but only opposition to US aggression and support to Viet Nam.

Viet Nam folk songs and music in the heart of the City of Light

Once I saw Mr T.V.K. in his private house. His small sitting room was decorated with many types of Vietnamese musical instruments, ranging from the *don nguyet* (moon-shaped guitar), *nhi* (two-string violin), *ong tieu, sao truc* (bamboo flutes) *don bau* (mono-string guitar), *thap luc* (16-stringed instruments) and *trong cheo* (drum) to the *senh tien* (cymbals) and *phach* (castanets) and *don day*, instrument used to accompany some specific types of North Vietnamese folk songs. A native of Nam Bo, he is an internationally known professor of music. He has been often invited to international musical congresses. His in-depth researches on Vietnamese music and musical instruments have been greatly appreciated by his colleagues in all parts of the world. Mr T.V.K. is also a talented musician.

During a talk on "local colour in Vietnamese folk songs and ancient music," he captivated the audience with his expert analysis and remarks and his performance of a whole series of folk tunes from South to North. On that occasion, he played the *don nguyet, don bau, sao truc* and *thap luc* and helped Vietnamese residents and ourselves get a deep insight into the rhythms and tunes of the *cheo* and *hat bo*, the two oldest popular theatres in Viet Nam, only to love them more.

Luc Van Tien in European dress

At *Tet* that year, a Liberation Reformed Theatre troupe arrived in Paris and gave a "family" performance to members of the NFL Delegation to the Paris Conference. Before the orchestra struck up, Doctor H., a jovial man who still looked very young, stepped out and addressed the spectators. We thought he was going to introduce or thank the theatrical troupe. But he only asked to play opposite to actress L. T. in performing in *Kieu Nguyet Nga*. He did not forget to apologize for the absence of make-up because of time pressure. So, that night we had the rare chance of watching a *Luc Van Tien* in a trendy European suit besides a *Kieu Nguyet Nga* in her beautiful and charming ancient costume. By now I am still amazed at the precise gestures and good voice of this doctor-artiste. He is really a professional actor brought up on the boards. Other spectators and myself were so fascinated by his good performance that no one paid attention to his modish European attire. All that we saw was *Luc Van Tien* of the past century loath to take leave of his sweetheart to go and sit for a court exam, to melodious and refined songs and music.

the sunflowers

A play "Down with US aggression" *performed by the Voviet Federation in its annual Festival*

A cook who is a *cheo* fan

From the very moment the North Viet Nam Song and Dance Ensemble arrived in Paris for a tour, Mr L. a *chef* at the Maubert restaurant in the French capital, left this eating house and joined the art troupe. His only ambition was to cook tasty Vietnamese meals so that the actors and acctresses could eat well and be always in good shape as they had to perform almost every night, not only in Paris but also in other French cities. He told me that he was passionately fond of the *duong truong, xa lech, chuc cam hoi van, luyen nam cung, dao lieu, he gay*, etc., (various arias in the *cheo* or popular theatre). I did not think so, however. The rhythmic sounds of the drums, the melodious flutes, the bright colours of the flowing tunic North Vietnamese peasant girls used to wear in the old days, the lithe motions of the hands, the head turban, the bearing of the prince inthe play "*Tam* and *Cam*," (Vietnamese Cinderella) all that was like a call of the homeland on its onward march. And so he cooked for the artistes, day and night, without showing the least sign of weariness.

A cook who is not fond of US dollars

I had many opportunities to visit London. Each time he learned of our arrival, Mr D. always came and met us, accompanied by his wife and children. A man of over 60, this Northerner was still very robust. He specialised in French cooking (he had done it for many years in Paris) and, with the professional training he received from the French *chef*, Escoffier, he had made himself a good name.

He had come to London to earn his living. His art of cooking European food was highly appreciated by many foreigners. A Vietnamesse resident in Britain told me that when the late President Kennedy was taking office, he sent for Mr D. hoping that with high fees, our cook would help make the inauguration feast a memorable occasion.

But Mr D. just told the presidential envoy, "It wouldn't make sense that as a citizen of independent and sovereign Viet Nam, I should go to America and cook for the president of a country whose troops are invading my homeland."

For the frontline

In 1971, during a meeting with a medical delegation which came from the liberated zone of South Viet Nam, a Vietnamese dental surgeon was shocked to see in a film a cumbersome drill dating back probably to the Stone Age. His fellow-countrymen in France agreed that this state of things should not be allowed to continue. They started collecting necessary materials and parts and finally a new model instrument came into existence. This battery-powered tool weighed only 1 pound and could make 7,000 rotations per minute. Simple up to medical standard, and very handy. B., its designer and maker, who worked in the Applied Science Department of the Union of Vietnamese Intellectuals in France, said 300 such instruments were to be turned out in the immediate future. They gathered and worked on the project by night. As there were more and more helping hands and bigger and bigger donations for the purchase of materials, the target was expected to be achieved soon. Preparations were underway for the production of another instrument capable of making 17,000 rotations per minute for "special cases" in dental surgery.

Knowing that field medical stations at home badly needed small-sized electric generators for surgical operations or other purposes; Vietnamese residents decided to make small, light, tropicalized and high-capacity generators. At first, it seemed unfeasible. Nevertheless, from a part of a second-hand Junker 51 plane, B., T. and others made one worked by pedals and equipped with a Cadmium Nickel battery. At great pains they succeeded in cutting down its weight from 17 pounds to 10. Now they can mass produce such generators as the material needed is available galore. And everything is done after office hours.

PARIS at night is bustling with such activities of Vietnamese nationals. Vietnamese are fighting for the independence and freedom of their Fatherland everywhere. As President Ho Chi Minh put it, "the whole Vietnamese nation is a beautiful flower garden," whether in France, Britain, Canada, Japan, America or anywhere else in the world, the Vietnamese are like beautiful sunflowers that are turning towards the warm and beloved "Viet Nam Fatherland" sun.

KHA DINH

short anecdotes great actions

"Liberation Fighter" badge distributed by the French Communist Youth Union to support Viet Nam's anti-US struggle for national salvation

Editor's note. — *The aggression now being stubbornly pursued by the Nixon administration against Viet Nam has not only aroused a wave of indignation among world-wide public opinion, but also triggered a powerful movement of universal solidarity with, and support for, our people's resistance.*

Many significant actions have taken place within the framework of the drive.

Following are some related anecdotes.

Rescue motor-launches

Upon learning of the US imperialists' bombings of dykes in North Viet Nam, Dutch friends in the "Holland Support-Viet Nam Medical Committee" feared that Nixon's move might provoke flood. Better than anyone else, the Dutch know what these calamities are like, having had their dykes destroyed by the Hitlerite fascists. When floods occur, first-aid is of prime importance. For prompt rescue work in such an emergency, nothing is more convenient than well-equipped motor-launches. Therefore, the Dutch friends immediately bought 7 rescue motor-launches to be presented to Viet Nam. Each of them are provided with medicine chests and necessary first-aid appliances, worth about 10,000 florints.

In view of much rain in Viet Nam, each craft is furnished with a canvas cover.

Australian demonstrators urging US troop withdrawal from Viet Nam

A ship for Viet Nam

Support-Viet Nam organizations in many Western European countries have been setting on foot the "A ship for Viet Nam" movement. To contribute to it, the French peace movement has been organizing money collections to buy anaesthetic and resuscitation equipment for Viet Nam.

This movement has become ever more ebullient since the visit to North Viet Nam by Prof. P. Huguenard, a world famous expert in anaesthesia and resuscitation, and head of the Anaesthesia and Resuscitation Section in the Henri Mondon Hospital. The professor has given many lectures on his trip to his colleagues, and called for quick dispatch of such implements to Viet Nam at a time of US intensified devastating bombings.

Prof. Huguenard also expressed his admiration for the devotion and creativeness as well as the skill of Vietnamese surgeons. "In the midst of incredible material hardships," he said, "I saw that in Viet Nam a surgery wa s being shaped which can be regarded as advanced even in countries living in peace." He went on: "Our assistance to Viet Nam is not a one-side solidarity. France has many things to learn from Viet Nam. During my 10 days in Viet Nam I learned a lot. Just try to read the materials on my desk. This is a document on an anaesthetic method newly experimented in Hanoi, more economic thanks to its use of air instead of oxygen..."

Proceeds from the sale of a garden

Mr S. (he does not want to reveal his name), is a retired worker in Colombes. For a few years now, from his quarterly pension, he has set aside 300 francs for "Viet Nam's victory." He takes the train from Paris to St Lazare and then goes on foot to the Editorial Board of *l'Humanité* to hand in the sum. "Why take the metro," he said to them, "I am still vigorous and I like to walk and I want to save money too."

He has done so for years now. But early last November, an unusual thing happened at the paper's Editorial Board. "Probably," he said, "peace cannot be immediately restored in Viet Nam. I have just sold a plot of garden. Here is one million (old) francs to help Viet Nam treat the wounded from US bombings. At the end of this quarter, I shall come again to make my usual contribution."

A one-kilo ingot of gold

Early last November, a French friend named Jean Claude Rabier, Professor of Sociology at Lille University, living in Paris, telephoned to the PRG Delegation at the Paris Conference, asking for an appointment to hand over a gift from a friend of his in Lille in support of fighting Viet Nam.

As agreed, on the afternoon of November 15, 1972, Mr Rabier called at the Delegation's seat and delivered a small parcel containing a kilo of gold. He said it was from a friend of his in Lille named Alain Desmoutier, a former teacher. Recently Mr Desmoutier has inherited a rather big legacy from an uncle including a number of ingots of gold. He has decided to use this fortune for humanitarian purposes. Learning that Prof. Rabier is a Viet Nam sympathizer and knows a number of Vietnamese residents, he asked him to forward an ingot of gold to the South Vietnamese people's delegation.

A ring from Amsterdam

On the evening of last November 10, Mr Pham Van Ba, Director of the PRG Information Bureau in France, visited Holland and gave an account on the Viet Nam situation on the Amsterdam T.V. Answering Dutch friends on questions coming by phone from various parts of the province, Pham Van Ba scored the Nixon administration's manœuvres to prolong the negotiations and the war, and its piling up of crimes in both parts of Viet Nam, especially its intensified extermination bombing on densely populated areas.

The next morning, the Holland Support-Viet Nam Medical Committee received a ring:

— "Last night I heard a Vietnamese delegate speaking about the situation in Viet Nam. This calls for each Dutch man and woman's greater assistance to the Vietnamese. I contribute 10,000 florints (over 3,000 US dollars).

— Thank you very much, please give us your name to be mentioned in our Viet Nam bulletin.

— Don't mention any name, please. Just say this is a small gift from a Dutch friend of Viet Nam."

VIET NAM WAR, A US WHITE ELEPHANT

IN his statements regarding the signing of the agreements on ending the war and restoring peace in Viet Nam, the White House spokesman said that the US President was not in a hurry and prepared to wait till a solution that he regarded as "right" is reached, in other words a solution on US terms.

This is nothing but another version of the trick often used by the US in negotiations to secure a position of strength. It is designed to make the world believe that the US is in no hurry to end the war, that it can and is ready to prolong the war, and intensify it till our people accept its conditions.

Of course, such manoeuvres can deceive nobody. The Vietnamese people who have successfully resisted aggression for over a quarter-century, are fearless of hardships and sacrifices. They have braved all difficulties to advance steadily and record substantial successes. They will never accept a peace without independence and freedom. Moreover, our people who have confronted the US imperialists for decades, can assess accurately their real nature and capacity. Myths about the US invincible force or unlimited resources have been exploded one after another by our people. Today the whole world is aware that the US is staggering under the heavy burden of its war of aggression in Viet Nam, which has cost it many lives and much money and had disastrous consequences on its life. *Time* magazine said on November 5, 1972 that the Viet Nam war has done much moral harm to the American people. Besides, it has given rise to a long list of internal problems including university, housing, public health, ecology and others.

No need to dwell on the contents of these internal problems, but one should stress that they have grown worse over the years. Administration after administration, at the beginning of its term has boasted of many ambitious plans; and the most ballyhooed plan was L. Johnson's against poverty to build the American society into a "great society." In the 60's, not a few people thought that the US with her apparently inexhaustible riches would provide the gun and butter promised by their president. But the US war of aggression in Viet Nam has run against the unyielding and enduring resistance of our people; and the US warmongers have failed to end as quickly as expected. The longer the war drags on, the more costly in lives and wealth it is to the American people. The war of aggression has bitterly failed in Viet Nam, and the war against poverty has humiliatingly gone bankrupt in the United States. Now US economic and social situation is already critical before the US president is inaugurated for another term, According to Mr Charles L. Schultze, former director of the Johnson administration's budget, there were at that time 14 million families or some 40 million people or one-fifth of the population living on or even under the poverty line. Unemployment ran to over 16 per cent in the blackcommunities, that is three times higher than the acceptable rate of white joblessness—5 per cent. In the world, only 14 countries had higher rate of infant mortality than the United States which was 22 to 100,000 white children; this figure was nearly double—41 for the black children (French paper *Le Monde*, November 9, 1968). Series of similar problems were found in other aspects of the American life. They seemed inexplicable in an affluent country as the United States; but they do exist, Mr Nixon in his 1968 presidential election campaign promised important reforms to alleviate the seriousness of these troubles.

But what has he done? The American paper *International Herald Tribune* reported on September 3, 1972 that on the approach of the last presidential election day there were still many urgent internal issues.

The number of unemployed Americans reached some 5 million, that is 6 per cent of the country's total labour force.

The present US industrial output is only equal to that in mid-1969, the level before the economic crisis.

Inflation continues to rise at the annual rate of 3 per cent, and the prices of daily necessities have been soaring.

In the past two years, one and a half million Americans have been listed by the US Labor Department as poor. And who can give accurate statistics about really poor people who for this or that reason are not mentioned by the administration.

As reflected by many American newspapers, today the American people are not only facing many difficulties but also insecurity in their everyday life due to unemployment, inflation, hooliganism, etc. Over four years ago, Richard Nixon, a candidate to the US presidential election, remarked that the growth rate of crime in the capital of the United States — 100 per cent rise as compared with 1960 — was a shame on the country. But four years after he took office, the situation became worse. Crime has been on the upgrade year after year. According to official communiqués of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, in 1971 alone, crimes committed in the US increased as follows :

— car thefts : 2 per cent

— night robberies : 9 per cent

— muggings : 10 per cent

— kidnappings, hold-ups murders : 11 per cent.

In the first 6 months of this year, also according to the same communiqués, there were three million serious offences (*New York Times*, Oct. 22, 1972). For the Washington citizens to go out at night is rather risky, for one may be assailed or robbed any moment (*US News and World Report*, March 27, 1972).

One of the most visible causes of the unsolved internal difficulties in the United States is the chronic deficit of the budget due to huge military expenditures serving the rulers' ambitions of expansion and aggression. According to US official statistics, under the Johnson and Nixon administrations, that is the years of the US prolongation and escalation of the war (1965-1972), the gap in the US budget widened as follows :

— in 5 years under Johnson : 36.1 billion dollars

— in the first 4 years of the Nixon administration : 79.1 billion dollars

Total in the past 9 years : 115.2 billion dollars

To see clearly the impact of extravagant war expenditures on the US budget, one has only to recall that in the same period (1965 - 1972) the US direct expenditures for the Viet Nam war amounted to 119 billion dollars, without taking into account various indirect spendings worth hundreds of billions of dollars. In other words, the US could have easily avoided this dismal state of things in the past ten years if it had not waged its costly war in Viet Nam and Indochina. Besides, it would have had a surplus of hundreds of billions of dollars to meet its priorities at home and abroad. This inbalance in the US budget also causes other serious evils such as inflation, devaluation of the dollar and its effect on the balance of payments and foreign trade in the past few years.

Through these initial figures, one can clearly see that the longer the aggression in Viet Nam and Indochina — a war that the US can never win — the more internal difficulties the US will have to face. It is quite safe to say that the Nixon administration has no hope to make good on its promise made at the beginning of his presidential term, namely to bring to the American people prosperity without inflation and war, let alone solving a series of complicated foreign problems, if this war of aggression in Viet Nam is not promptly brought to an end.

VAN DUC

Here

and there

*

Cavemen

The world press recently was engrossed by the discovery of two jungle men in a wooded area on Lubang Isle (The Philippines). They were Kosuka and Onoda, respectively officer and man of the Mikado's old army, who had fled into the forest after the US troops landing in the Philippines at the end of the Second World War. They had been living the life of primetive men. Kosuka fell to a bullet of the night patrol who had spotted them, while Onoda succeeded in escaping into the wilderness.

The Japanese government, informed of the occurence, undertook an extensive search. For many days on end, Japanese and Filipino authorities, accompanied by his brother and sister and carrying an ample supply of Japanese flags combed the place, calling with megaphones : "Onoda, your task is completed. Come back", "Elder brother, come back to us." But they received no response. And no traces of the fugitive. "As a rule, he is very suspicious", some of his friends commented.

This incident called back to my mind this line of poet Cui Hao : "The man of yore riding a crane is gone...", which lends it a touch of fairy tale and its hero the aura of a world-weary hermit, jealous of his solitude.

Without trying however to impart to this piece of news a political purport as some foreign papers did with such headlines : "The last dead of World War II" or "For them, the war is not yet over," I do wish for Onoda's coming home to the sweets of a family life.

But is he aware that it will not be without bitters? As he is certainly not abreast with the latest vicissitudes at home and abroad alike during the last three decades, he must still keep whole his notions of the world and things as they were when he fled into the jungle. How could he understand that the US and Japan, who were then sworn enemies, are now closiest allies, while the former is still occupying part of the latter's territory. And that as the first world power, a victory of his own Mikado, it is held in check in its aggression against, and has been bogged down in, Viet Nam, an obscure former colony of France, another power so easily supplanted by the Imperial Army under the "Greater Eastern Asia" scheme.

"Truly," he would not fail to remark with a sigh, "how times have changed!"

He would have a lot of trouble readjusting himself to an international life which has undergone such ups and downs as would completely upset his ancient ideas.

HUONG NAM

Viet Nam in the world's songs

VIET NAM

Viet Nam, an already beautiful name,
But a thousand times more beautiful
Since an inhuman storm
Has been descending on it from top to toe,
Since its soil has been dotted with graves.

There was a time, not long ago,
When horror was mingled with hatred,
And now the very ones who yesterday
Cursed the tyrant who destroyed with fire and
Sword an innocent race
Are visiting on you, Viet Nam, the same fate.
From accusers in their demented fury
They turn executioners and sowers of death.

Plague on them! But your gallant fight
Viet Nam will brand on their foreheads
Before night falls
The stigma of a just and shaming sentence!

FRANZ HELLENS
(Belgium)

Viet Nam

I'd like to ask the moon in the sky,
When she passes, at night, on her long, eternal road
Who can show me my own way,
So that my life will be just, pure and full
Of love for proud men,
And on which I can learn honour and truth.

I'd like to ask the sun, all the winds
Where I could be happy and contented,
Where lies and hatred are unknown,
Where the love for man and honest labour reign.

The moon has told me she knows of a green country,
Where the beauty of the girls is like the blue of the sea,
My beams have caressed the bay named Ha Long,
And splashed on the waves of the Vam Co Dong.

I know the brave people who live on its shores.
And I'd like to be one day, night, in their sweet dreams.

One day I received sad news from the sun:
"It's useless! Those brave people can have no more peaceful sleep
Guns are always booming from Hanoi to Da Nang,
Ha Long and the Vam Co Dong are red and stained with blood!"

JARKA BLAHOVA
(Czechoslovakia)

VIET NAM

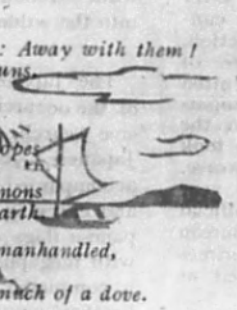
Simple is our watchword: Light.
We proclaim freedom
And reap necessity.
We say necessity
And reap hazard.
Liberty, responsibility, duty, we repeat
Sublime: We hang
Our family portraits in blazing houses.

On the map.
We scan the reverse side
Of our world,
A mirror where masks lose their faces,
Fields where fruits of death
Burst, the frontiers
In the reverse of our light
Beyond which a whole people are bleeding.

September 4, 1965
STEIN MEHREN
(Norway)

viet nam

I shout this very loudly from Rome: Away with them!
Away with those rifles, with those guns,
With those rockets, with those planes
With that weird flag, that like



Away with him who in peace lays traps
To invade in his name other nations
And who plants in his name his pennons
And claims in his name the entire earth.

Sad peace so often invoked, so often manhandled,
Poor dove so much stabbed
And she might die because she is so much of a dove.

I demand the only peace, the genuine one,
The one-faced peace, before its death.
I demand peace! I shout this from Rome.

RAFAEL ALBERTI (Spain)
Rome, 1965
(From *El poeta en la calle*, Ebro, 1966)

Viet Nam

It is as though it was not in Viet Nam,
As though it raised in my heart
An infernal shower of napalm.
A black wound is gaping there
And excruciates me to death.
It is as though it was not in Hanoi,
As though it was not in Haiphong
That the sirens wail,
That the bombs explode,
It is as though it was in my beloved Sofia.
It is as though my own house was reduced
to ashes,
In this modern Middle Ages.
And fury grips my soul
And excruciates me to death...
Viet Nam
Is one of the facets
Of my heavenly paradise
Viet Nam
Is one of the feet
Of my huge body.
Viet Nam
Is my very old earth,
Earth soaked with blood.
In the hell you create,
Do you believe in your crime?
And do you
Hope
To dodge my revenge?
America,
Never forget
Believe me, my Viet Nam
Measure for measure must be answered.

CHRISTO RADEVSKI
(Bulgaria)